

**JADAVPUR
JOURNAL OF
COMPARATIVE
LITERATURE**

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2007-2008

Editor

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**DEPARTMENT OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE
JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY
CALCUTTA**

**Founded by
Buddhadeva Bose**

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our contributors

We dedicate this volume to Buddhadeva Bose who established this department and whose centenary year we are celebrating. We begin with a reprint of an essay by Bose that originally appeared in *Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature*, 1959 and was later reprinted in *Contribution to Comparative Literature: Germany and India*, Jadavpur University, 1973.

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COMPARATIVE LITERATURE IN INDIA*

Comparative Literature as an academic subject was unknown in India until 1956, when it was introduced at Jadavpur University, Calcutta. The University itself had only just come into existence; it had evolved out of an engineering college with half a century's history of struggle and idealism, I will briefly recount that history, so as to sketch the background against which this youngest humanistic discipline made a beginning in this ancient land.

The beginning of our twentieth century was a period of ferment and upheaval. An intense national awakening led to the first great phase of the struggle against British rule, as well as to an impulsive cultural resurgence. In Indian history it is known as the age of *swadeshi* (*swadesh* = own land, motherland) and it is honoured by all Indians as the source of many an idea on which is founded the Indian Republic of today. The movement started in Bengal, in 1905, as a protest against Lord Curzon's notorious partition of that province, and though it spread to other provinces, it was in Bengal that the shock was most creatively felt. The cry was not for political freedom alone (and that was then a far cry), but for self-determination in all those non-political areas of life, the total of which is civilization. Out of this same impulse came the first Indian cotton mill, the first history of Bengali literature, and the first 'national' school.

I have put the word 'national' within quotes in order to suggest its proper historical context. At that time Lord Curzon had enforced a sinister system of education which aimed at transforming a small number of wealthy Indians into perfect colonials completely divorced

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from their native tradition and culture. The reaction to this was not only an anguished protest in the press (which was soon to be throttled) or the boycott of Calcutta University by the most brilliant students of the year (all of whom were to become eminent educationists later), but the founding of a parallel system of education, bearing the then meaningful adjective, 'national'. The best minds of Bengal collaborated on the project and its leadership was briefly assumed by the poet, Rabindranath Tagore. In 1906 was formally established the National Council of Education (Jatiya Siksa Parisad) which, I may say at once, is the ancestor of Jadavpur University.

The spirit of the National Council was indeed nationalistic, but only in the sense that it aimed at meeting the real needs of the nation, on the literary, scientific and technical sides. Chauvinism it abhorred; the ideas and technics of the West it welcomed; what it rejected was the notion of education according to the exclusive pattern of England and its heritage. The Council declared itself to be "*not in opposition to, but standing apart from*" the British system of education; it retained English as a compulsory subject, but sought to impart education through the medium of the mother-tongue, thereby anticipating the educational scheme of Free India. Its curriculum for the Humanities included Literature, History and Philosophy, with emphasis on India, but not to the exclusion of other areas. Among the Council's teachers were Rabindranath Tagore, Aurobindo Ghose (as Sri Aurobindo was then called) and Ananda Coomaraswamy — not to mention other names widely known in India but not abroad.

However, the boycott of Calcutta University did not and could not continue. The demand for education was great, and the Council's resources were small. For a number of reasons, among which must be counted resolute opposition from the Government, the Council had to close its Humanities and Science sections after a few years. Meanwhile, the British policy of education was somewhat liberalized, and beginning in 1907, when Sir Asutosh Mookerjee became Vice-Chancellor, Calcutta University steadily worked for exactly what Lord Curzon was anxious to prevent: the creation of a large, educated and economically dissatisfied middle class, so necessary to liberate a country from foreign rule.

Remained the Council's Engineering section, which continued to function and even grow through years of peril and hardship. After many

vicissitudes it moved from the 'downtown' area to Jadavpur (1924), a suburb in South Calcutta, and was renamed the Jadavpur College of Engineering and Technology (1928). The college received many students, but neither any financial aid nor proper recognition from the Government. Its degree-holders, who were refused admission into British institutions, went for higher studies to Germany or America, and returned home with scanty hope of entering the higher cadres of Government service. Although its position improved in the early forties, it was only after independence that it gained full status and recognition, at home and abroad. Then, in 1956, it became one of the three faculties (the other two being Arts and Sciences) of the youngest university in India.

It may seem rather curious that pioneering in Comparative Literature should be done in India by a university which grew out of an engineering college. Seen in the historical context, however, this becomes significantly appropriate. The engineering college was an offshoot of the National Council of Education, and the Council conceived of education as 'three-dimensional', with pure science, technology and the humanities working together (instead of contending for supremacy) to create the goods and values of civilization. An extension lecture delivered at the National Council may have sown the seeds which were to bear fruit half a century later. The year was 1907; the topic, Comparative Literature; and the speaker, Rabindranath Tagore. I will paraphrase a passage from the Bengali text where Tagore, as Goethe did before him, launches the idea of World Literature.

I have been called upon to discuss a subject to which you have given the English name of Comparative Literature. Let me call it World Literature in Bengali.

If we want to understand man as revealed in action, his motivations and his aims, then we must pursue his intentions through the whole of history. To take isolated instances, such as the reign of Akbar or Queen Elizabeth, is merely to satisfy curiosity. He who knows that Akbar and Elizabeth are only pretexts or occasions; that man, throughout the whole of history, is incessantly at work to fulfil his deepest purposes, and to unite himself with the All — it is he, I say, who will strive to see in history not the local and the individual, but the eternal and universal man. His pilgrimage will not end in observing

other pilgrims, for he will behold the god whom all pilgrims are seeking. Likewise, what really claims our attention in World Literature is the way in which the soul of man expresses its joy through the written word and the forms which he chooses to give to his eternal being. Whether he portrays himself as a sick man or a voluptuary or an ascetic — the impulse is always the same, and that is his joy in uniting himself with the world. It is in order to realize the truth of this relationship that we must enter the world of letters. It is absurd to think of literature as artificial; it is a world whose science no individual can ever master; as in the world of matter, its process of creation is perpetual; and yet in the heart of this ever-unfinished creation there is an ideal of stillness and completion...

What I am trying to say amounts to this. Just as this earth is not the sum of patches of land belonging to different people, and to know the earth as such is sheer rusticity, so literature is not the mere total of works composed by different hands. Most of us, however, think of literature in what I have called the manner of the rustic. From this narrow provincialism we must free ourselves; we must strive to see the work of each author as a whole, that whole as a part of man's universal creativity, and that universal spirit in its manifestations through World Literature. Now is the time to do so.

It should be obvious that what Tagore said in his metaphorical language is substantially the same as what theoreticians of World Literature, particularly in America, have recently made clear to us, through elaboration and literary analogy. Wherever Comparative Literature is taught, there is the assumption that the literatures of the world form one comprehensive whole, with numerous historical and spiritual inter-relations, and to discover and study these inter-relations is the specific task of this new discipline. It is true that American universities make a distinction between World Literature and Comparative Literature, but however this distinction be defined, there are no doubt large areas where the two overlap, in intention if not in scope. The fact is that Comparative Literature cannot but include several literatures of the world and juxtapose a number of different traditions. So the first question that arises is: which of the numerous literatures of the world are we going to choose?

American universities, with their great resources, can satisfy nearly everybody by offering a number of alternative courses covering every

important civilized tradition. To us at Jadavpur, however, the answer to this question was made relatively simple by the limitations of our capacity. It was felt that the most intense moments in Western literature, from antiquity to the present times, must be represented — along with the living literature and the classical tradition of the native soil, in this case Bengali and Sanskrit. It is scarcely necessary to offer a defence for the inclusion of much of Western literature in a course intended for Indian students; for it cannot be denied that the Western mode of life and thought has spread to all parts of the East, and in particular to India, now fast becoming a part of the modern world. But skills and technics are not the only components of 'the modern world'; in order really to be assimilated into it, the younger generations of Indians must also know the main features of the Western mind, as exhibited in literature through the ages. Moreover, their understanding of their own literature will remain imperfect and even slight unless they are exposed to many literatures of the Occident. Cultural interflow between India and the West, so auspiciously begun in Schopenhauer's time, has continually increased in volume and intensity, and just as some knowledge of the East is indispensable for a proper understanding of Eliot or Yeats or Pound, so Tagore and many other writers of modern Bengal may refuse to yield their riches to one who does not know Shakespeare and Milton, Ovid and Dante, the English Romantics, the French Symbolists and their successors, Whitman and the great Russians.

Here I must interrupt my report to give the reader an idea of the state of literary studies in India. The least encouraging thing about it is that English is almost the only Western literature properly taught in Indian universities. Some have introduced French — but English, with its infinitely better employment prospects, continues to dominate. Sanskrit has survived through British rule, though with progressively declining popularity. Modern Indian literatures, however, and especially Bengali, have been forging ahead during recent decades, which is both natural and good. But is it either good or natural that English, among all the great Occidental literatures, should hold a virtually exclusive position in India? That the situation has been so during the last one hundred years is understandable, and we all know that much good has come out of it — but has not the time come to take a broader view of Europe and the Western world? Let me stress that it is not *English*

that these queries are aimed against, but the *exclusive* hold of any single literature of the Occident. Since English is the most widespread foreign language in India (some even regard it as an Indian language), the academic position of English studies is fairly secure, and there is no reason to regret this. Yet Indians are not by any definition an English-speaking nation, nor have they any recent racial ties with Britons; so the compulsion that has existed for any ambitious student of Western literature to concentrate on English must be regarded as unfortunate and incongruous. A similar situation would be intolerable to a Russian or Japanese, or even to an American, whose links with England are numerous and vital. We too during recent decades, without forgetting our debt to English literature, have felt that our exclusive devotion to it has resulted in a considerable weakening of our culture. It is sad to reflect that generations of educated Indians have known Europe exclusively through England, so much so that the two became synonymous terms, at least in literary contexts. We imbibed British prejudices (often demoted in the home-land), adopted the likes and dislikes of the British schoolmaster, applauded Robert Bridges and denigrated D. H. Lawrence; and many of us (quite conceivably) did our Eng. Lit. from *Beowulf* to Thomas Hardy without as much as hearing of Baudelaire or Heine or Anton Chekhov. In other words, the attitude of most Indians to English literature has been *colonial*, and not that of an intelligent and responsible foreigner who is able to experience it on a footing of equality. To what extremes of insensitivity this attitude can lead the unwary becomes painfully apparent when we find the names of Dante and de la Mare coupled in a piece of critical writing, or an insignificant English writer rated above an Indian of real merit. An obvious remedy for this is the dissemination of the knowledge of Western literatures other than English; and it is here that Comparative Literature can fulfil a very real need. A person exposed to many literatures (and there never has been a critic worth the name who was not) will know where to place an author in the historical context and how to evaluate him aesthetically; he will know that the two are different though related functions and be able to distinguish between writers who are of interest only in their local tradition and those who have significance for all nations and all times. This is a modest enough claim, but this is the foundation of the critical faculty.

The emergence of a branch of study including many literatures would also seem to be dictated by the relative poverty of critical writing in modern India. One notices a serious discrepancy between the extent and duration of English studies in this country and the quality of contribution made to them by Indian scholars. For this the reason was not lack of talent or industry, but the unhappy fact that English literature in India was not regarded as a branch of Western literature, but as something isolated, self-complete and sacrosanct. A contributing impediment, I must add, was the self-imposed obligation of expressing oneself in a foreign language. The standard of workmanship and critical acumen is generally higher in the productions of scholars in the native literatures, who have less hesitation in using the mother-tongue, though there, too, many talents are frustrated through extremely slight acquaintance with related or comparable literatures. It would be justifiable to alter Goethe's words and say that one who knows only one literature knows no literature at all, for it is only by comparing authors of different traditions that one can acquire a proper scale of values.

On these considerations is built the framework of the Jadavpur curriculum, which, in plain language, is a combination of Sanskrit, Bengali and the major literatures of the West. Many valuable areas, such as Arabia or the Far East, had to be sacrificed to make room for what was felt to be a greater immediate relevance. Sanskrit is essential for an Indian student of literature, as much as Greek or Latin for an Occidental; without it, he will remain ignorant of the roots of his language and tradition. Irrefutable, too, is the claim of this *native* literature, that is, of the language which he speaks naturally and which for him must remain the major field of research. An intelligent and well-informed evaluation of the native literature, and the production of interpretative criticism — these are the two rather important contributions to culture we would expect our scholars to make. Their knowledge and their training should equip them to work on foreign literatures without embarrassment or artificiality and on their own without false praise, false modesty or parochialism.

It may seem that we are only re-stating an aim which has always been present before criticism. Croce once defined Comparative Literature as a new name for a time-honoured practice. Indeed, generations of writers and critics, without being professional 'comparatists', have used

the material and technique of what is now designated as Comparative Literature. What, then, is the cause that led to its being marked as a separate discipline in European and American universities? The answer to this is immediately available: it is the inhuman extreme to which specialization has been pushed in our century, and not only in science and technology, but in philosophy and literature. The writers and critics we are thinking of were men who had received a broad-based and many-sided education, not only through their own efforts but even at universities. During the ages when academic training in literature was based on the Renaissance conception of the Humanities, criticism remained free from the danger of becoming professorial harangues addressed exclusively to students and other professors. But in an age when philosophy is regarded as a method, history as a social science and criticism is often cramped with technical jargon, the need for something spacious is all the more keenly felt. Comparative Literature, essentially an eclectic study, is a corrective to the excess of esotericism which now prevails in academic circles. It is an effort to liberalize literature and re-humanize the Humanities.

II

Comparative Literature at Jadavpur started in much the same way as Professor Tillyard, in his charming little book, *The Muse Unchained*, describes English literature to have started at Cambridge, England. There was more of inspiration than calculation, and of enthusiasm than formality. Teachers were recruited from local men of letters (one of them had never taught before), Belgian-French Indianized Jesuits, and young talents just out of college. During the second year we had with us an American couple, professors both, and one a devotee of the 'delight and discipline' of Comparative Literature. Of the five students admitted into the M.A. course in the first year, three were novitiates in writing, one had done his B.A. major in Mathematics, and all were interested in literature for its own sake. The smallness of the number of students and eagerness on both sides, engendered that intimate exchange between student and teacher which everybody knows to be desirable but which it is difficult to achieve under Indian conditions. Duration of classes often outran the fixed 'period', and many is the time when the discussion

was continued in teachers' homes. People not connected with the university came to the seminar meetings and took some interest in the work we were doing. In the first M.A. examination held by the university (in 1958) all our five candidates did creditably, and one of them secured the highest marks for all women candidates of the year. Three members of the department, one assistant professor and two ex-students, are going to the United States this year (1959) on fellowships or scholarships offered by that country. Among last year's M.A.'s one has been appointed a lecturer at Jadavpur, and another, who has a teaching post in Rangoon, is preparing a dissertation on the Bengali Novel in the twentieth century.

It must not be imagined, however, that Comparative Literature has had an easy time during the first three years of its existence. There was scepticism, and even opposition, voiced in academic circles and outside them, and in newspaper columns. Doubt was expressed whether a course including a number of literatures could constitute a proper academic discipline. Much of this was due to genuine misunderstanding of the scope and intention of the subject, and not a little to that mistrust with which the human race has always looked upon innovations. When subjects such as History or Philosophy are mentioned, nobody thinks of asking whether it is Indian or British or French or American history that is taught, or Hindu or Greek or German or Chinese philosophy. There may be special papers on national histories or philosophies, but the subjects as a whole are acknowledged to have reference to the whole of our human civilization. But a similar conception of literature, though advocated by our greatest man of letters, is new in India and is regarded with the same suspicion as was English literature at Oxford and Cambridge, and Bengali at Calcutta University, when they were brought into existence. Those subjects have not changed in substance during the decades following their inception; but they offended then because they were new and they offend no longer because they are not.

The chief ground of our critics was the inclusion of several translated texts in the curriculum, unavoidable in any course on Comparative Literature. The old, old question was raised: "Is reading literature in translation reading it at all?", and was countered by the old, old rejoinder: "But how many languages can one learn?" Now the question of translation has been gone into so thoroughly in recent

times, by scholars, philosophers, poets, amateurs and translators themselves, and such quantities of aphorism, epigram, opinion, prejudice and argument have been produced on both sides, that it is unnecessary for the present writer to say a single thing about it. Yet it is well worth repeating that to take the extreme-purist viewpoint would be to commit oneself to the absurd position that since one doesn't have the time to learn Sanskrit, Chinese, Spanish, Russian and Norwegian, one must forbear from knowing the *minds* of Kālidāsa, Li Po, Cervantes, Dostoyevsky and Ibsen. And even the extreme-purist often reads his *Mahābhārata* or his Bible in translation, and has respect for men like Matthew Arnold, André Gide, Yeats, Shaw and Thomas Mann, who have written authentically on Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Tagore and Ibsen without knowing a single word of Russian or Bengali or Norwegian. The knowledge of languages is important, but it has not direct bearing on literary understanding. Tolstoy thought *King Lear* insufferable, though he had read it in German, French and English, whereas Ezra Pound, without being a Chinese scholar, has done more for the diffusion of Chinese literature in the Occident, than any other single person except Arthur Waley. It is not only a question of how many, but of *how much* of any foreign language one can learn, especially when one starts in adult life when the mind has already acquired certain habits and preoccupations. An intelligent and cultured Frenchman of my acquaintance was taught English and German at school, but had read most of his Shakespeare and Goethe in French. No question there are many like him in all continents. To try to tackle a great work in the original, on the strength of having 'done' the language as a part of the school routine, and possibly in a foreign country, would show courage and hardihood rather than a desire for knowledge. One is free to choose between two alternatives: the grim satisfaction of struggling through a few pages of the original, with grammar as the primary aim, and the enriching experience of racing through an author's 'inscape', in a language one can easily comprehend. The philologist will choose the former; the humanist, the latter. And Comparative Literature, though it needs the knowledge of languages, is *not* a language school. If it has to do with literature, as is incontestably the case, the necessity of translation is ineluctable.

"The catholic conception of World Literature," as Professor Henry H. Wells wrote in the first volume of this *Yearbook* *, "must indeed lean heavily on translation. Whatever may be the ideal, in practice translation looms large. It is not part of the definition of World Literature, but it becomes, nevertheless, a highly important aspect in its methodology." The inadequacies of translations are obvious enough and widely discussed; what is not so often noticed is that able and conscientious translators do succeed in covering not only the thought but the style of the prose or the structure and tone of the verse. In any case, the loss is more on the subtler points of craftsmanship than substance. And the least that can be said of the substance of literature is that it engages the attention of all, whereas craft is of interest primarily to other writers. Goethe went to the length of saying that though he honoured rhythm and rhyme "by which poetry first becomes poetry,... what is genuinely and deeply effective, what forms and advances us, is what remains of a poet when he has been translated into prose." All poets may not agree with Goethe, but I feel professors must. The study of technique has a strictly limited scope even in single-literature disciplines; there, too, it is what an author has to say, his notions of man and the world, that matter most; and in this respect Comparative Literature, instead of losing, rather gains in richness of content.

At the moment of writing, the curriculum at Jadavpur is undergoing revision. To take first the question of knowledge of languages, its value has never been overlooked. The introduction of a Language paper in the B.A. course (Sanskrit or French or German) was suggested by the department in 1957, when it was decided to put the Language paper in the M.A. syllabus. It is now proposed to go back to our original plan and shift the Language to the three-year B.A. course (the M.A. is of two years), which will give the students one more year to learn and some ability to use the knowledge at the M.A. stage. The language suggested is French or German for those who had studied Sanskrit at the pre-university stage, and Sanskrit for those who had not. Under this plan all our students will know one classical and two modern languages (Sanskrit, English and Bengali), and some of them one classical and three modern (Sanskrit, English, French or German, and Bengali). To try more than this would be unrealistic in Indian conditions, but it is needless

* *Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature*, 8 (1959), 1-10

to comment on the possibilities that will always exist for the more ambitious students, to increase or improve their knowledge of languages when they embark on research or teaching.

On the literary side, the B.A. course is planned on a historical or vertical basis, and the M.A. organized on a thematic or horizontal plan. In other words, we intend to give our B.A. students a solid grounding in literary history, both of India and the West, with the help of a number of basic and typical texts. Exhaustive textual study of the prescribed works will not be insisted upon, but students will be made familiar with movements in ideas (e.g. the Renaissance, the Enlightenment), the rise and development of literary forms (e.g. the sonnet, the novella) and clashing or complementary concepts such as Classicism, Romanticism and Naturalism. They will know the outlines of the antiquities in Europe and India and the medieval and modern ages in European and Bengali literatures. To those who will seek employment after taking the Bachelor's degree this will offer a substantial course by itself, and this will mean an adequate preparation for those who go up for higher studies at Jadavpur or elsewhere. Themes, styles and literary forms that cut across many centuries and cultures will enter into the M.A. course; here there will be room for specialization and aesthetic considerations, and for the specific study of the inter-relations between the different literatures.

Judging by the number of students, ours is one of the smallest departments for any university in India. The present total (1958-59) is 25, of whom 13 are women. Both the number and the ratio of the sexes are symptomatic of the times. As long as the present trend in India continues, there is small ground to hope for a big rise in either the total or the proportion of men students. Better employment prospects and changing ideologies are drawing increasingly greater numbers of men away from the Humanities to engineering and the natural and social sciences. To the departments of literature and philosophy come occasionally those who have an irresistible urge for the subject, but more generally the second best, and not infrequently those who just want to postpone the date of the beginning of the 'struggle for existence'. Among those who come with eagerness and without any protest from their families are a great many women (by far the majority in some cases).

who are now free to exercise their wits and talents in fields other than housekeeping, but for whom the question of making a living has not yet become the deciding factor. How far the Humanities have declined in India will be seen from the fact that the B.A. Honours course in Philosophy has recently been abolished at Presidency College in Madras. Comparative Literature has the further disadvantage of being on rather uncertain grounds as regards employment prospects, which consideration will deter many suited for literary studies.

Let me add, however, that it would be unfair to take a pessimistic view of the question of employment, with which that of education is so sadly and solidly linked. All the five who took their Master's in 1958 are now employed in teaching or literary work or are preparing to go abroad on scholarships. It would be natural to doubt whether such success can be repeated every year, but not too optimistic to assume that students leaving this department will have a more than slender chance of obtaining scholarships offered by countries like France or America where Comparative Literature occupies a position of honour in the universities. The question remains whether or not they will get suitable employment in India when they return from abroad, and what will happen to those who finish their education at Jadavpur. Their qualifications should be adequate for college-teaching in English and Bengali literatures, and should officially be regarded as such. On this point the university has already assured the relevant authorities. A research department is also under contemplation. The position could be further improved by the introduction of this discipline into other Indian universities, specially those which are new or in process. At present we have the distinction and disadvantage of being the only Comparative Literature department in India, but certainly in a large country like ours there is room for more.

Let us also note that research and college-teaching, though covetable to many, are not the only possible avenues of employment. There are openings in journalism and broadcasting, which in India and elsewhere absorb a certain proportion of persons trained in literature. Teaching school now that high schools are being upgraded in India, should eventually attract a good many. Some may even become men of letters, of which the nation now needs a goodly number, in the shape of editors, translators or publicists. Our foreign service should need persons with

knowledge of languages and the cultures of India and the West. Another possible field is the civil services, where recruitment is made by competitive examinations. The point is that a liberal and humanistic education is to be valued for its own sake, and a person who has received it is a social asset, no matter how he makes his living, as teacher, administrator or publicist.

Potentially, India is one of the richest fields for Comparative Literature. The age and complexity of our civilization, the diverse elements that compose it, that 'world-hunger' of which Tagore spoke a hundred times and which took possession of us with the dawning of our modern age — all these provide the material and the atmosphere demanded by the nature of this discipline. The history of India is a story of absorption, adaptation and assimilation, of continual coming to terms with foreign influences, and of resistance transformed into response. We have great links with many cultures of the East and West; our religions have influenced Western thought; interest in our arts and literatures is now keen and widespread. If Comparative Literature is permitted to develop, it can be of service in bringing India and the world spiritually closer and it can make a small contribution to the growth of that cosmopolitan spirit which is much more discussed than achieved. Nothing reveals the soul of a nation as clearly as does its literature, nor is there any other thing where the basic unity of mankind is felt with such force and animation. The controversy provoked by Comparative Literature at Jadavpur can in itself be regarded as a sign of its viability, and its necessity has been recognized at least by the Bengali department of Calcutta University which has recently introduced a Comparative paper for the study of one literature other than Bengali, but connected with it.

POETRY AND THE PUBLIC : A NOTE ON THE POETRY OF KADAMMANITTA RAMAKRISHNAN

The most obvious approach one can have on the poems of Kadammanitta Ramakrishnan (1935 - 2008), written primarily in the seventies and eighties of the twentieth century, would be to describe them as belonging to a newly emerging popular tradition of Malayalam letters, perhaps as constituting the work of the most popular Malayalam poet of the recent past. Kadammanitta's popularity as a poet will undoubtedly be endorsed by all sections of Kerala's reading public.¹ If a "non-literate" Malayali with no reading habits were to be asked who the most popular poet of the last quarter of the twentieth century was, he or she would not have to think twice before naming Kadammanitta. The answer would not be different if the same question were to be repeated to the readers of the period with "low-brow" tastes as well as to those with "middle-brow" or "elite" tastes. The reading sessions that he held in parts of Kerala in the seventies and eighties used to draw huge crowds of poetry-loving public that went into raptures over his deep baritone voice. His printed poetry collections likewise were in great demand during the time. They remain so even today and can be seen to have gone into several editions. The current DCB edition of his *Collected Poems* (1983) has had more than a dozen editions -over a short span of time, something unusual in an age that is generally perceived as turning itself away from poetry. What is it that makes Kadammanitta so enormously popular among all sections of the reading public?

If one were to answer that question in a logically convincing way one would have to take a closer look at the phrase "popular poetry" and see how the two words "popular" and "poetry" begin to gel as they acquire new resonances in the world of Kadammanitta. Poetry, unless one is thinking of the folk forms of poetry, is not generally regarded

as a popular genre of writing, and popular poetry might appear to be a contradiction in terms. But in Kadammanitta the whole idea of popular poetry receives a new political twist so that poetry gets integrated into the concept of the "people." Here indeed is one who has become instrumental in effecting a radical change of sensibility in the Malayalam poetry of the post-Independence era. As already suggested, the tradition of poetry that he represented in the seventies certainly was not a dominant one, not even a fully developed one. This is the reason why the fact of his popularity as a poet provokes a number of important questions concerning the relation between popularity and tradition: Can one talk about a tradition in the making as a popular tradition? What is the relation between the poetic tradition and an emerging sensibility? How is the popularity of a poet linked to the idea of cultural domination?

One might answer these questions by defining Kadammanitta as a representative of what Deleuze and Guattari describe as "minor literature," which according to them is literature that, instead of adding one more work to the existing canon, disrupts and dislocates that tradition by effectively creating a new identity for the reading subject implicated in the literary process.² Franz Kafka is Deleuze and Guattari's prototype for such literature in the global context. It is not Kafka's status as a Czech Jew writing in the German language that makes him a representative of minor literature, but the power his language wields in imagining and creating a world of experience that is not majoritarian in thrust. It is not a given, privileged identity that Kafka's writings create - *create*, and not *express* - but an identity that can be described minority in as much as it gives voice to real "people," not of course to the privileged few who are defined in standard terms, but to the subaltern sections of the society who form the undiscovered and unarticulated mass of the people. Kadammanitta's poetry is minor literature in that it creates a new minority identity that serves as a rallying point for articulating the concerns of the underprivileged in Kerala's society.

If what has been outlined above is the sense in which Kadammanitta's popularity is to be understood, his works would indeed prompt one to rethink received notions of tradition, popularity and poetry. Kafka's name is symbolic in this context, as Kafka along with several other avant garde European, African and Latin American writers of the early

twentieth century represented for the Malayalam writers of Kadammanitta's generation a new attitude to the literary text that acted, simultaneously, as an attitude to the experiential world. The popularity of his poetry is rooted in the inseparability of the world and the text. Moreover, if it is the careless and uncultivated poetic taste manipulated on a massive scale by the technology-driven mass media of contemporary times that one thinks of when one talks about popularity, then Kadammanitta's poetry would hardly suit the description of popular poetry. His popularity on the other hand is linked to the historically constructed fears, dreams, anxieties, longings and aspirations of the average Malayali who came into emotional and intellectual maturity in the decades following India's independence. It is these attributes of identity present in his poetry that connect it to the world of his times, to the history of his region and to the subject of his land. Kadammanitta's poetry, in other words, is the poetry that objectifies and historicizes the anxieties and dreams of an age whose dreams and anxieties in a sense are also about self, identity and history.

This is another way of stating that Kadammanitta's poetry is linked to the turbulent times in which he started his writing career. The sixties of the last century constituted a turning point for Malayalam writing. It was a decade that witnessed radical and experimental works emerging in all branches of literature. Ayyappa Paniker, Akkitham, NN Kakkad, Madhavan Ayyappath, OV Vijayan, Kakkanadan, Madhavikkutty, Kovilan, G Sankara Pillai, CN Sreekantan Nair: these are some of the names associated with developments in poetry, fiction and drama that announced a new verve and vigour for Malayalam letters. Though it is by the name of "modernism" that these developments are known by the students of Malayalam literature, it is a fact of history that Malayalam modernism is not a monolithic development, but represents a confluence of disparate and divergent tendencies, which indeed are not exhausted by the authors mentioned. One might also talk about the passage of this confluence from the politically indifferent aestheticist phase of the sixties to the radically engaged socialist phase of the later decades. This passage overlaps with, and sometimes runs parallel to, the transformations that overtook modernism over a long period of time at the international level. The differences that exist between versions of poetic modernism that flourished in European, Anglo-American, African and Latin American

cultures in the first half of the twentieth century are indicative of wide-ranging diversities at the formal and thematic levels that in no way can be reduced to the monolithic notion of an essence of modernism that expresses itself in different ways in different cultures.

Though it is customary to look upon the aestheticist modernism of the sixties as marking a clean break from the complex of poetic tendencies of the previous decades, often allied to versions of the romantic sensibility, one may not be fully justified in treating aestheticist modernism as non-romantic or anti-romantic in essence. A comparison of R Ramachandran or Sugatha Kumari, both often treated as romantic in temperament and sensibility, with any of the modernists mentioned above might prove this. Certainly, we are used to the critical practice of driving a wedge between the sensibility represented by these two writers on the one hand and the poetic ethos of aestheticist modernists like Ayyappa Paniker or NN Kakkad on the other. Ramachandran and Sugatha Kumari, according to this tradition, represent the basic virtues of the romantic culture that was getting increasingly obsolescent by the late fifties, while Paniker and Kakkad are the quintessential representatives of aestheticist modernism that was on the rise during the period. But it is also to be noted, in the context of contemporary revelations regarding the consanguinity between the romantic and modernist sensibilities, that aestheticist modernism in Malayalam did not constitute an absolute repudiation of the ideals of romanticism. What the modernists repudiated in effect was the ostentatious rhetoric of poets like Changampuzha. This repudiatory tendency of course had started appearing in earlier, non-modernist writers like Edisseri, Vyloppilly and P Kunhiraman Nair. What the modernists of the sixties and seventies did was only to bring this tendency to its logical conclusion. This was why we described the poetic scene of the sixties as representing a confluence of currents drawn from diverse sources. Here is a state of transition in which the emerging features of modernism integrated themselves with the dominant tendencies in romanticism to push into the hinterland of culture the residual aspects of poetic romanticism.

The concepts "dominant," "residual" and "emergent" used in the above formulation are borrowed from Raymond Williams.¹ Williams uses these terms in the course of the elaboration of his "epochal" analysis, in which a cultural process is understood as a cultural system with

determinate dominant, residual and emergent features. If in the pre-sixties Malayalam poetry aspects that can be described romantic were in dominance, there indeed was also developing a cleavage in the sixties within the romantic culture. It was this cleavage that gave rise to aestheticist modernism that was soon to become the dominant literary tendency of the decade. Deploying Williams's concepts again, the situation of Malayalam poetry at the dawn of the seventies can be summarized roughly as follows: There was the dominant tendency of modernism, which worked almost like a movement, and which included such poets as Paniker, Kakkad and Akkitham. The residual literary culture of romanticism was still active in the best writings of Sugatha Kumari, ONV Kurup, Vishnu Narayanan Nampoothiri and others. There was also the evidence of a newly emerging political concern that appeared as a development within modernism represented by the poetry of Kadammanitta, Attoor Ravivarma and of the younger poets of the day like Satchidanandan, D Vinayachandran and KG Sankara Pillai. The picture given might appear a little too simplistic as we find the distinctions unsustainable with reference to the later poetry of some of the writers mentioned above. To give an example, in the light of the later development of the poet, it may be unjust to treat Kakkad as a spokesperson of aestheticist modernism. In the same way, Ayyappa Paniker has from the seventies onward toyed with too many divergent forms, which makes it difficult for us to reduce him to being a voice of aestheticist modernism.

One might on the whole say that the seventies were a sort of "political" decade for Malayalam poetry, comparable to the earlier "pink" decade of the thirties, as it happened in Malayalam fiction. The seventies, as we know, were politically important years for civil society in India. This was the period that marked the end of the Nehruvian era of liberal humanism and welfare economics. Socialist and secular ideals were facing new challenges from various authoritarian and neo-conservative forces. The high-handed, undemocratic ways that the state adopted in putting down popular struggles came as shocking experiences for the masses. The imposition of the Emergency of 1975 provided an occasion for the powers that be to carry out a sort of dress-rehearsal for the kind of state terror that was to become so common in later years in parts of the country. The marked political activism of the seventies

could have been a result of all these forces working together. No writer could escape responding to the politically surcharged atmosphere of the day. Even aestheticist modernists could not resist going political, if only in some of their poems. This is the context that prompted a poet like Ayyappa Paniker, who developed through his poetry what might be called an “aesthetic of cynicism,” to write poems of a politically subversive kind in this period. His “Cartoon Kavithakal” (“The Cartoon Poems”) and “Maharaja Kathakal” (“The Maharaja Stories”) provide examples of verse that take an overtly political position in satirizing the authoritarian tendencies of the ruling elite.

This in brief is the context of emergence of the poetry of Kadammanitta. His early poems of the late sixties, in spite of their social protest and the tone of anger and resentment that they carried, were wedded in general to modernism’s aestheticist culture. It is difficult to distinguish them from the dominant poetry of the period that cultivated moods of pity, self-torture and existential angst. Readers and writers active during the period might recall that the French existentialist philosophy of Sartre, Merleau-Ponty and others had served an important iconic role in shaping the context of Malayalam modernism. Informed Malayali readers of the time chose to read or misread major European novels, including those of Kafka, Camus and Sartre, with the philosophical spectacles of French existentialism. Not that the readers, or even the authors, of the period were familiar with the nitty-gritty of French philosophy. As often happens in situations of this kind, themes and concerns specific to an ongoing debate in a foreign culture are enlisted in the service of a native debate, which in the case of the Malayalam literature of the period revolved round the question of the artist’s social commitment. The modernists were inclined to reduce this question to one that concerned the artist’s personal freedom to say “no” to a society he/she despised. This indeed should have been read as part of the larger question concerning art’s relative autonomy and the dialectical relation between art and the social formation. These aspects of the problem, one might remember, were furiously debated by the theorists - Marxists, Frankfurt theorists and others - who took part in the realism-modernism debate in Europe around this time.⁴ In the absence of such rigorous theorization of positions in the Kerala context, Malayalam modernism of the time was content to revel in moods of self pity and existential anxiety.

This is the reason why the much talked about "French" connection of the Malayalam modernism of the sixties does not go beyond the depiction of a morally decrepit character as the hero of a novel or, in poetry, the metaphoric elaboration of an event or experience characterized by personal frustration and loss of hope. The protagonists of Kakkanadan's novels and Ayyappa Paniker's poems "Kurukshetram" (1951-57) or "Mrityupooja" (1967) are examples. Kadammanitta's own "Chita" ("The Pyre," 1966), will neatly illustrate this point. The speaker in this poem who leans dispassionately against the pyre of dying longings and relishes the smoke of a beedi is a perfect replica of the hero of an "existentialist" novel. He obviously is a dreamer who "wanders on torrid wings" like "a piece of dark cloud," but whose "drowsy longings" take him nowhere. His grief moves him to laughter:

And here I lean against
This pyre made of my life spirit,
Fired by my lifeblood,
Where perish my longings
By the hundreds,
And relish a beedi smoke.⁵

Other early poems like "Njan" ("I," 1965), "Ormayude Vatilil" ("At Memory's Door," 1965) and "Nagarathil" ("In the City," 1966) also express similar sentiments. An excess of self-indulgence seems to be the hallmark of most of these poems, though there indeed is an awareness of the social in some of them. In "Nagarathil," for example, in spite of the pervasive sense of futility in the air, there is also this mild criticism of an effete culture that promotes bonsai trees on the sides of the road and grows forest vines in glass bottles. These are the bad new days when, in contrast to the days of Kalidasa's *Sakuntala*, one comes across the legendary heroine in the guise of a stenographer in the corporate office of the company where Dushyanta is the manager. Such a weird sight can only arouse "Despair in the twisted face of a culture/That once rode the chariots of history."⁶

The awareness of the social indeed is what sets Kadammanitta apart from the other modernists of his generation. It was his open declaration of his commitment to the social made at a literary gathering in the mid-sixties in Madras that prompted M Govindan, the patron of Malayalam modernism outside Kerala and a well known follower of communist-

turned-radical humanist MN Roy, to pay special attention to the young man who had not yet published any poetry. In several of his interviews Kadammanitta has dwelt upon the special relationship that he had maintained with Govindan since this first meeting. Kadammanitta was an ardent communist then - which he indeed remained till the end - and was a Government of India employee posted in Madras. Govindan, the Royist that he was, was perceived by communists to be an enemy of the party. The perception represented a deep political divide that indeed was crucial for a number of Indian intellectuals in the decades that we are reviewing. The divide however does not seem to have had much impact on the warmth of the relationship between Govindan and Kadammanitta. It was Govindan who directed Kadammanitta toward writing serious poetry, and published the latter's first poem in his own influential journal *Sameeksha*.

Kadammanitta's position on the function of art, which maintains - against the dominant view on art held alike by traditionalists and modernists, including, among them, Govindan - that art has a social function whether the artist is conscious of it or not, seems close in spirit to the theoretical position of the mid-century European Marxist modernists who participated in the realism-modernism debate. Every artwork, Kadammanitta suggests, is endowed with "an intrinsic objective." For him this is also an argument on behalf of social commitment that would compel an artist "to sink into and be part of the society to which one feels committed." The position however has remained unelaborated beyond this, except for the poet talking about it briefly in some of his interviews.⁷ Some of the poems that he wrote immediately after the initial flush of creative energy had ebbed were more articulate about this, one might say. In 1965 itself he had written "Tarum Kuttichoolum" ("Tar and the Broom"), a poem that forcefully expresses the ire and anger of the world against an unjust system that perpetuates social inequity:

Why should you shut the door in my face?

You think only you

Have a share on this holy ground?

Why this sham, this feint,

You thorn in the vineyard?"

The speaker's ire is against those who have "shut the door in his face" and have shooed him away with a broom as they would a flea. He to

be sure does not mean to leave things as they are. He grabs the broom, makes a pen of it, and walks briskly about with a pot of tar in hand, painting black circles on the mansions of the glitterati in society:

That is the broom I've grabbed,
To make of its bristle a pen,
With which I've come,
With a pot of tar and a broom,
Singing songs of wrath,
To blacken this your mansion
With sooty slime from the sewers.⁹

This is a kind of blood-and-thunder poetry - the phrase "songs of wrath" in the poem quoted is an indication of this - that Kadammanitta soon abandons in favour of a more politically meaningful verse, the kind of poetry that we characterized above in these pages as minor literature. One might mention several of his early poems as inaugurating this trend. "Oru Pattu" (A Song, 1965) and "Kozhi" ("The Hen," 1967) can be mentioned as marking significant changes in Kadammanitta's poetic sensibility. These poems are important because it is in them that we see the poet move decisively away from his early style of writing and engage seriously with the folk imagination in his culture and develop a mythology spun around the history and the language of his people. The mature expression of such a mythology can be found embodied in such poems as "Kadammanitta" (1967), "Kattalan" ("The Woodlander," 1968), "Kiratavrittam" ("The Kirata Episode," 1969) and "Kurathi" ("The Goatherding Woman," 1978). These poems represent and create a new political identity for the subjects immortalized by them. This identity is different from anything that had been produced in Malayalam poetry before, and it is in the language's power to be different that one has to look for its uniqueness.

That the poems mentioned above led to a massive and radical politicization of modernism in the seventies is obvious enough. This represented a new and somewhat rough and unbeaten track, quite far from the royal road through which the modernists then were proceeding. Looking in retrospect at things today, we realize that Kadammanitta was not alone in opting for the new road, which at that point in time seemed to be leading nowhere. In fact there were many roads open before the poet to get him/herself politicized in this period. The road that Attoor

Ravivarma, a fellow modernist, chose to politicize himself was to demystify the self and present its workings in a thoroughly unromantic, unpoetic language. The major theme in Attoor's poetry is the loss of self that accompanies the erosion of values in the present. This concern with the self leads to a rejection of tradition and a contradictory stance toward the present. In "Sankramanam" (1974), Attoor's highly acclaimed poem that expresses this sentiment, through the image of the decaying corpse of a woman, the poet invokes the idea of the decline of a culture that is uncivil and patriarchal. The poet KG Sankara Pillai in such poems as "Bengal" (1972) written during the period adopts a similar, though mythically richer, approach. Another road is exemplified by the poetry of Satchidanandan, who in the period develops a radically new rhetoric and imagery of protest and dissent in his effort to politicize modernism.

Kadammanitta's road of folklorizing poetry perhaps is the least trodden path that the modernists took during this time. Indeed the rustic vigour of this poet mingled with a folk idiom and a rhythmically incantatory language to render his poetry utterly unlike anything that was written before. It was oral poetry that he wrote and written poetry that he spoke. His belief in the strength of the folk tradition has been firm and unshaken. He says: "A people's very identity is rooted in what you call the folk tradition. Therefore it is easier getting at our people instantly if you compose with an awareness of this tradition."¹⁰ It was indeed with a deep awareness of the folk tradition that he wrote and read out his poetry. As pointed out above, his voice enthralled large audiences in Kerala who were used only to the ways of *seeing* poetry that they read. Poetry certainly is to be seen, but is also to be heard, if only with one's inner ears. It is to be seen through the sound and heard through the printed word. This was a great lesson that the audiences in Kerala, terrorized for a long time as they were by the visible, were learning from Kadammanitta. It was more of an *unlearning* experience for them. Poems like "Kozhi," "Kurathi," "Kattalan," and "Kiratavrittam" all drew phenomenally large audiences wherever they were presented. Even "non-folk" poems like "Bhagyasalikal" ("The Lucky Ones," 1973), "Parati" ("Grouses," 1972) and "Shanta" (1976) internalized the folk magic of hearing the visible. These poems would let us see how the poet integrates language's *spoken* power with visualized experiences of the social and the domestic.

Several critics of Kadammanitta have traced the dominance of rhythm and spectacle in his poetry to his early background in the folk ritual of *padayani*.¹¹ *Padayani* is dance and spectacle, but it is equally noted for the rhythmic songs that accompany the spectacle. It is his early association with *padayani* that allows Kadammanitta to create a folk atmosphere in several of his poems, especially in the ones that seek to reconstruct and comment on contemporary culture in terms of *padayani* metaphors. Even in poems that may be considered personal in orientation, the power of the language can be seen to emerge from an experience that is rooted in the emotionally purgative function of the *padayani* ritual. Here are a few lines from "Bhagyasalikal" ("The Lucky Ones"), a poem that integrates language's power with subjective experience:

Listen to my stories, sweetheart,
Hum to them and, while humming,
Comb your fingers through my hair
And remove the gray ones.
Look for lice and place them, gently,
On the nail of your left thumb and crush them.
Scratch me slowly on my back
And break the boils one by one,
Yes, like that - what relief!¹²

Kadammanitta was discovering not only himself and his subjective identity in the process of using language in this way but was also, in a true Deleuzian move, refashioning the self and identity of his reading subject. He was recovering the history and culture of a land that had suffered a kind of collective amnesia. See how in a poem like "Kadammanitta" the speaking subject merges with the reading subject and the two together coalesce into the culture and ethos of the land. The "praying memories" that the speaker of this poem carries as a hump on his back are formed of sounds, sights and smells as well as of the people of the land and their beliefs. *Their* beliefs, yes, but no distinction is sought to be made between them and the speaker's own beliefs. The speaker obviously shares in those beliefs. That is why the poet says,

I walk
Watching scenes from the pond,
Overgrown with weeds and moss,
Which *Ulagavati* in the middle of the night

Visits for her bath,
 Where the land's virtues
 Drowned themselves to death,
 Where nowadays only the branches
 Of the *palai* trees
 Cast their tremulous shadows.¹³

One might wonder for a moment how Kadammanitta who is a materialist of a certain kind could bring himself to identify with apparently irrational beliefs. This again is the magic associated with writing. It is said of the Columbian novelist Garcia Marquez that his tales in the magical realist style proceeded from their materialist author's "belief - in whatever sense one might choose to gloss that word - in the supernatural events that he depicted. The notion of the autonomy of art and creativity would allow the artist freedom to suspend disbeliefs that might be deemed to restrain him/her as a true artist. This is the power of language that Deleuze is talking about. One need not be a non-materialist to believe that language has the power to change the world. Kadammanitta knows this, and that is why the protagonist's expiatory appeal to goddess *Kaali* in "Kattalan,"

Hug me in an embrace, O dark *Kaali*,
 Crush me in an embrace, O great *Kaali*!¹⁴

also becomes a call for the institution of a new social order. The call is renewed in poem after poem, with an atavistic, almost savage, energy in poems like "Kiratavrittam" and "Kurathi," where woodlander-like figures become the central characters. These are some of the poems in which Kadammanitta uses language as active formation, creating in the process collective assemblages of people, whose identities cannot be subsumed under a general, universal subject. Here is the woodlander in "Kiratavrittam":

There stands the woodlander
 In the middle of the burning forest,
 Like a female leopard newly delivered,
 Her wet eyes open,
 With the eyebrows turned up a little,
 Like the sprout
 From the tail of a deadly cobra,
 There he stands,
 With a burning torchlight on his chest.¹⁵

The woodlander image in Kadammanitta is an icon of identity and socialization. Questions of history and culture and of the native self merge in this icon. The knowledge that much of what humans have created, like the monument in "Kannur Kotta" ("The Kannur Fort"), which for all its pomp and glory in effect announces only "the utter stupidity of history," is part of the semantic environment surrounding this image. Human greed and pursuit of material civilization often lead to a despoiling of the culture and ethos of the land. That is why the woodlander in "Kiratavrittam" says:

They who have defiled the hills
Must float headless in the seas.
They who have cut down the trees,
They who have cut up my clan,
Of their entrails I'll make
A chain of wick lamps
To light up the world,
I'll make reeds of their windpipes
And make music that will rouse once again
The old inebriant spirits.¹⁶

Similar sentiments are expressed in several other poems, including "Kunje Mulappal Kutikkarutu" ("Don't Drink Breast Milk, Baby," 1980) and "Nagarathil Paranja Suvisesham" ("The Gospel Said in the City," 1979), poems that differ vastly from each other in terms of iconographic provenance. There certainly is an underlying sense of optimism in many of the poems, as in "Shanta" where the speaker hopes that "something might happen some day." Something positive indeed might happen in the future, and it is also this possibility of a shared and luminous future that holds together the collective assemblage of people implied by Kadammanitta's poetry.

NOTES & REFERENCES

- 1 This is a slightly revised version of the introduction written for a forthcoming selection of Kadammanitta Ramakrishnan's poetry in English translation, to be published by Sahitya Akademi. See Kadammanitta Ramakrishnan, *The Cat is My Grief Today and Other Poems*, ed. and trans. P. P. Raveendran (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, forthcoming).

2. See Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature*, trans. D. Polan (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986).
3. Williams' Raymond, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1977), pp. 121-27.
4. The theorists who participated in the debate were Ernest Bloch, Georg Lukacs, Theodor Adorno, Walter Benjamin and Bertolt Brecht. For a record of this debate see Ronald Taylor, ed. *Aesthetics and Politics* (London: New Left Books, 1977). There is an Afterword on the debate by Fredric Jameson in this volume.
5. Ramakrishnan, Kadammanitta, "Chita," *Kadammanittayude Kavithakal* (Kottayam: DC Books, 2005), p. 56. All translations from Kadammanitta's poetry included in this essay are mine.
6. Kadammanitta, "Nagarathil," *Kadammanittayude Kavithakal*, p. 62.
7. See, for example, his interview with AV Sreekumar that makes a brief reference to this in *Pachakutira* 3.6 (2007): 16-21. An earlier interview with NR Gramaprakash, which is available in English translation, also makes a mention of this. See NR Gramaprakash/K. Narayanachandran, "Learning to Speak the Good Word: An Interview with Kadammanitta Ramakrishnan," *Haritham* 1.2 (1993): 126-37. The portions quoted are from the interview published in *Haritham* (132-33).
8. Kadammanitta, *Kadammanittayude Kavithakal*, p. 54.
9. *Kadammanittayude Kavithakal*, p. 55.
10. Interview with Gramaprakash, *Haritham* 1.2(1993): 133-34.
11. *Padayani* is a folk performance done as part of the ritual worship in some of the *devi* temples in southern Kerala. Kadammanitta's father was an accomplished *padayani* performer. The *kavu* at Kadammanitta, which appears in several of Kadammanitta's poems, is famous for its *annual padayani* performances held in the month of *Medam* (April-May). Kadammanitta's association with *padayani* goes deep into his childhood, when as the son of the chief *padayani* performer at the *Kavu*, he must have been fascinated both by the outward spectacle of the figures of the *padayani* as well as the mythology that surrounded the performance. Critics of Kadammanitta like Narendra Prasad have written elaborately on *padayani's* influence on the poet. See his introduction in Kadammanitta, *Kadammanittayude Kavithakal*, p. 11-37.
12. Kadammanitta, "Bhagyasalikal," *Kadammanittayude Kavithakal*, p. 131.
13. *Kadammanittayude Kavithakal*, p. 81.
14. *Kadammanittayude Kavithakal*, p. 86.
15. *Kadammanittayude Kavithakal*, p. 87.
16. *Kadammanittayude Kavithakal*, p. 89.

EUROPE AND THE OTHERS: THE HOLOCAUST AND POST/COLONIAL RELATION

Toward a post/colonial redescription of European categories

In his recent attempt to replace the term post/colonialism by the term tricontinentalism, Robert Young (2001: 4/5) aligns the discourse of postcolonial theory with the three continents of the South: Latin America, Africa and Asia. He resolutely declares: "Postcolonialism was born with the *Tricontinental*", i.e. with the Conference of Solidarity of the Peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America, held in Havana in January, 1966, as well as with the journal established as a result of this conference. (Young 2001: 213) Introducing a complex relation with the North, the tripartite South has the privilege of avoiding the usual homogenization of "the non-Western" Third World, which implies the consequence of questioning the crude dichotomy between the West and the rest. Being "generated from a combination of diasporic and local contexts" (427), tricontinentalism makes such a sharp division obsolete. Established as a product of continuous historical interactions between the West and the three continents, compounded of the resistance within the West as well as outside it, it substantially extends the previous restricted idea of post/colonialism. Educated in Western institutions, many prominent postcolonial critics, like Fanon, Memmi, Said, Spivak or Bhabha, utilized the fact that the culture and ideology of Europe was never homogeneous but riven with contradictions and ambivalences" (68). Translating or redirecting, among others, such prominently European accepted tools like Hegelian or Heideggerian ones (Adell 1973: 29-30) the tricontinental and go betweens employed "inimical" concepts and concepts in a deliberately "catachrestic" way (Spivak 1993) to mobilize their European-represented counter modernist side, and consequently to postmodernize Europe (Chakrabarty 2000). As the title of Ashis Nandy's

study *Intimate Enemy* (1983) suggests, the Indian postcolonial theorists for instance, drawing on the rich heritage of Mahatma Gandhi's strategy of silent resistance within the imposed Western discourse, outwitted the colonizer by hybridizing his ideas and subverting the rules of his game. In addition, Gandhi's strategy has had a striking parallel in Martin Luther King's method of non-violent revolution implemented in the United States. (Memmi 1968: 6) In this redeploying manner the political regime and categorical apparatus of European modernity was in many parts of the world forced to dismantle its hitherto suppressed idiosyncratic aspects.

While extending such resistance to various kinds of subalterns without as well as within the North, post/colonialism gradually entered its global condition. (Said 2000: 295) As a consequence, what was longtime considered to be exceptional i.e. non-European was threatening to retroactively contaminate what was considered to be normal i.e. European, and vice versa. At the beginning of the new millennium, a global "state of exception" (Agamben 2005a) was looming on the world horizon. For example, an elite European theory like French poststructuralism, repeatedly accused for repressing the question of erstwhile colonies, suddenly turned out to be connected more with the Algerian War for Independence than with the French May 1968. (Young 1990: 1) "Many of those who developed the theoretical positions subsequently characterized as poststructuralism came from Algeria or had been involved in the war of independence." (Young 2001: 413) It is true that Althusser, Bourdieu, Derrida, Lyotard and Cixous did not belong to any of the Algerian indigenous peoples, but the subsequent history of Algeria has shown that this condition is "in its own way characteristically Algerian, for the many different kinds of Algerians 'proper' do not belong easily to the Algerian state either" (414). Like in many other non-European as well as European countries, Algerian national consciousness emerged only as a consequence of colonial oppression. Algeria had nothing in common as a country until 1830 when the French government was established and struggle against it began (Hobsbawm 1990: 138). The same holds, interestingly enough, for heterogeneous French poststructuralism whose single common trait was its stubborn theoretical resistance to any centralization. Young interprets it consequently as a composite theory developed out of the bitter Maghrebian experience of French centralized colonialism, which makes it inextricably Algerian and French at the same time.

British cultural studies can be reinterpreted along similar lines. In *The Black Atlantic* (1993) Paul Gilroy noticed "how much of the recent international enthusiasm for cultural studies is generated by its profound association with England and ideas of Englishness"; its ethnocentric profile fostered its rushed academic institutionalization (5). The whole tradition of English cultural reflection turns out to be based on ethnic and racialized attributes. Because a celebration of Englishness belongs to its infrastructure, "histories of cultural studies seldom acknowledge how the politically radical and openly interventionist aspirations found in the best of its scholarship are already articulated to black cultural history and theory." (6) "In so far as it takes the nation-state as the 'natural' (...) context of analysis, cultural studies reconstitutes national(ist) boundaries and betrays the fluid political figures of 'the diasporic', the postcolonial and the subaltern." (Morley and Chen 1996: 7) In such a context, Stuart Hall's autobiographic narrative of "the formation of a diasporic intellectual" contains a significant correction. In all accounts of the emergence of British cultural studies, namely, the New Left plays a prominent role as its precursor. It is usually understood as a peculiarly British response to the events of 1956 although it chiefly consisted of colonial intellectuals who came from outside in order to study in England. They founded the New Left because they were not allowed to join the established bases of the British left. As Albert Memmi (1968: 100) noticed, "if the French proletarian", himself being a victim of oppression, "wants to feel a little taller, whom is he to step on if not on the immigrant worker"? When entrance allowances are at stake, class happens to be a much harder issue than nation. "A lot of us were foreigners or internal immigrants; a lot of the British people were provincial, working-class, or Scottish, or Irish, or Jewish" (Hall 1996: 103) — consisting of various kinds of inner and outer "outsiders". Without the history of colonial relations, these "outsiders" would hardly have grouped together. British Marxists would not have joined them thereupon in the so called Socialist Club and the journal *Universities and Left Review* would never have emerged. It follows that the New Left ought to be called *British* only in this post/colonial sense of diasporic identity. Starting from its very beginnings, the national(ist) history of cultural studies has to be rewritten from a substantially revised perspective that is a different version of dispersed and fissured identity.

The delineated redoubling of the threshold *between* the “northern” and “southern” theory, or Europe and its others, *within* each of the sides respectively indicates the complex character of the so called post/colonial relation which does not allow for clean and sovereign positions. After the colonizers withdrew from former colonies and the colonized entered the heart of their empire, it became impossible to separate one agency from the other. The frontiers of racial, cultural or power difference could no longer be made congruent with national borders. Following these substantially altered circumstances, especially in the wake of Said’s *Orientalism* (1978) the post/colonial relation was re-conceptualized by a shift away from military, economic and political toward cultural, psychological and discursive rendering of post/colonialism characterized by a softer *inward* slash *within* the colonizer and the colonized. So Ashis Nandy’s resolute contention “that colonialism is first of all a matter of consciousness and needs to be defined ultimately in the minds of men” (1983: 340) may be regarded as a consequence of the insight that the withdrawal of the colonizer from colonized countries, instead of resolving the colonial condition revealed the possibility of an “inverse oppression” (Memmi). Nationalism tended to replace its previously liberating with a colonizing orientation: the former colonized turned into the harsh colonizer (Said 1993: 319ff.).

Thus instead of having been definitely abolished, the post/colonial relation was only reiterated. Within the heterogeneous and artificial territorial units inherited from imperial conquerors but now threatening to fall apart after the all-uniting enemy had disappeared, movements for national liberation were suddenly faced with the task to pacify the resistance of various ethnic groups to the invented idea of the nation. Once in power, they tried to implement assimilation accompanied by oppression, the same technique of European nationalism which was previously put to use against them, though now mostly doomed to failure because of the longtime colonially fed inimical conditions. (Hobsbawm 1990: 136/7) In the light of such interrelated developments, Europe and its others appear to have been from the outset inextricably intertwined.

While gradually expanding, this insight into the interchangeable roles and techniques of the seemingly sharply opposed post/colonial agencies finally spawned the convergence of post/colonialism with *internalized subject-formation* rather than, as before, outward national

oppression, political domination or economic exploitation. As a consequence, after having been exposed to difference and contamination and spoiled by the traces of hybridity, firm racial, national or ethnic identity as the most precious commodity in political battles and encampments got in trouble. Political considerations were substituted by psychoanalytic insights recalling important predecessors like Fanon or Memmi who had introduced them already in the 1950s and 1960s in order to disrupt the crude colonial binarism and the unified subject of national culture associated with it (Gates 1991: 470). Fanon's merits in this regard have already been emphasized by Gates (1991), Said (1993), Bhabha (1994), Fuss (1995) or Gilroy (2000), for instance, but Memmi's portraits of the colonizer and the colonized (1957; American translation 1967) as well as "dominated man" (1968) deserve much more attention than they have received up to now because he foregrounded the third (Sartrean) term of lived experience (*le vécu*).¹ Albeit applying the dualist Marxist or psychoanalytic model like Fanon, he was unlike Fanon clearly reserved as to their universal applicability objecting that they, forcing either society or individual as the final cause of the relation in question, equally tend to "pre-empt all lived experience, all feeling, all suffering, all the byways of human behavior" (1967: XIII; translation modified, as H. Greenfeld translates *le vécu* only with "experience"). In the oppressive frame of mutual conditioning (1968: 38), the colonizer and the colonized, each of them acting merely in response to the other, fabricate illusions and counter-illusions, myths and counter-myths, accusations and counter-accusations (49). That is to say, once alienation became mankind's common destiny, one cannot continue, like Marxists in their model of class struggle, blaming one group for dominating the other as both groups fall victim to the same objective condition. "The phenomenon is a general one, since it rises above classes, peoples and nations and perhaps - though no one has dared say it - the dominating and the dominated." (210)

Memmi therefore forces post/colonial theory to face the following important consequence: if lived experience is established as an all-encompassing framework that pertains to all particular instances, then all the models of its explanation provided by these instances make but reduced reactions to this framework which prevents them from gaining

economic and national renderings of the post/colonial relation, while trying to embrace and surpass each other, in the final analysis achieve nothing but reiteration of what was intended to be left behind. For Memmi, there is precisely *no final analysis* (1967: XII/XIII). That is to say, *no one theoretical model can explain the post/colonial relation without reinstating it in new terms*. As both the colonizer and the colonized interiorize this post/colonial relation via their lived experience, Memmi departs from the assumption that in the colonial situation no one of them can remain unaffected by the other. Each "portrait" is "governed by the other and arranged by the objective colonial condition." (1968: 85)

In this unconscious redoubling a kind of *partage*, i.e. simultaneous partition (separation) and sharing (complicity) of two sides takes place, which prevents each side in its attempts to once and forever relinquish the other. The behavior of the one side unconsciously reflects the behavior of the other, says Memmi, concluding "that oppression is an infernal machine, and that from the bond between oppressor and oppressed there is no escape" (3). "For, if colonization destroys the colonized, it also rots the colonizer." (50) "The white American ... will not emerge unscathed from his confrontation with the problem of the blacks." (210) This is so because, as Fanon already noticed, the more the usurper tries to crush the usurped in order to annihilate the unconscious sense of illegitimacy of his power, the more "he himself confirms his guilt and his own condemnation. Thus the play of the mechanism is accentuated, ceaselessly propelled, aggravated by its own rhythm." (1986: 53) "The Negro enslaved by his inferiority, the white man enslaved by his superiority alike behave in accordance with a neurotic orientation" (60). Fanon's point is that "the most horrible Europe's crime was committed in the heart of man, and consisted in the pathological tearing apart of his functions and the crumbling away of his unity" (1963: 254). Contrary to Hegelian claims, this pathological fissure can never be dialectically reconciled "in the service of a higher unity" (30). Each such unity remains imperial or, as Memmi would put it, just an emotionally ridden picture of the enemy. All that the colonizer can produce is but a "negative", "mythical portrait" of the colonized (Memmi 1968: 86) which helps him reassert his own superior position and combat the overwhelming sense of guilt (201/2). That is to say,

the self-consciousness of the master, as the supposed beneficiary of the established relation, turns out to be enduringly amputated and forced to look for various self-aggrandizing compensations like "the ideology of superiority" or "the glamour of whiteness" (Gilroy 2000: 67). Does not such a rendering of the master's predicament shed a new light onto belittling and scornful representations of European swarthy foes?

But the same "return of the repressed" holds also for the colonized stamped by the permanent "self-rejection" (Memmi 1968: 86). Memmi contests Fanon's "revolutionary romanticist" (87) claim that "the colonized is made inferior, but he is not reduced to servitude" and will once in the future dethrone the colonizer. The conviction that the victim remains intact throughout the oppression is for him "a lyrical way of sliding over realities" (87). "When the objective conditions are so weighty and corrosive", says he, "how could we imagine that they will not result in some destruction, that they will not warp the soul, the behavior and even the physiognomy of the oppressed man" (86)? As one figure in William Gardner Smith's *The Stone Face* (1963: 58) puts it: "Son, wherever racism exists, wherever oppression exists, anybody who lives complacently in its shadows is guilty and damned forever." With all due respect, therefore, Fanon's attitude amounts to "dodging the issue" (87) that the oppressed are people full of rage, hatred and torment "who despise their race and detest themselves" (20). However, one must not forget that according to Fanon's analysis of the self-recognition of the Negro in *Black Skin, White Masks* (1986: 21 Off.) the colonized is compelled to enact the colonizer mimetically, to adopt it as its Ideal-I, to desperately long for substitution although the latter is unfortunately, for obvious reasons of inborn racial, gender or cultural difference impossible to accomplish. This entails pathogenic consequences, turns the self of the colonized into an abject object of constant obsession, self-reproach and punishment. Hence several years before Memmi's *Portrait du Colonisé* (1957), Fanon has in *Peau noire, masques blancs* (1953) fairly well anticipated the pathological tearing apart of the dominated that prevents her or his final liberation.

These path breaking considerations of the founders of post/colonial theory make the cultural and psychoanalytical perspective from the onset interfere with the sociopolitical and economic one at least on equal terms. Moreover, Memmi's emphasizing of the cultural dimension

of colonialism implies that decolonization is an irresolvable process because, as the conditions change, anybody can take the place of the colonized: "the Black man", "the Jew", "the proletariat", "the woman" as well as "the domestic servant".² As a Tunisian Jew sensitized to perceiving various, interchangeable and permutable axes of oppression, Memmi opens his *Dominated Man* (1968) with a number of significant dedicatory quotations: "The poor are the Negroes of Europe." (Chamfort) "Women are the proletarians of man." (Marx) "I think of the African problem; only a Jew can understand it in its full profundity." (Theodor Herzl) Such a proliferation and diversification of the colonized turn the post/colonialism into an enduring and all-pervasive condition irreducible to "dark centuries", "marginal zones" or provisional condition of mankind. If the "sociology of good intentions or psycho-pathology" would hold, post/colonialism could be treated as a "monstrous and incomprehensible aberration" of human history and society limited to given periods or regions (194). If it, on the contrary, gets stubbornly reestablished instead of resolved, then it makes a constant and intolerable condition of history that, just because traumatizing, *unremittingly pushes toward redemption*. As the symbol and sum of all oppression, racism is for Memmi all-embracing: it invisibly permeates ideology, religion, culture, literature, education, media and family upbringing. (197/8) "The struggle to combat racism is long and arduous, an attack to be launched again and again, a campaign that will probably never be ended." (206) Containing difference within sameness, racism gets reiterated. It is precisely its ceaseless reprocessing that has to be consistently commemorated until the eventual absolution.

Thus taking into account an always-already pre-existing post/colonial relation that recurs in each political order imposing itself unpredictably both upon the colonizer and the colonized (197), Memmi replaces Fanon's predominantly revolutionary with a decisively redemptive perspective. If both side's deficiencies (87) are caused by a "fundamental mechanism" (194), they cannot be absolved before the mechanism is undone which, as everybody unwillingly reproduces it, has to be postponed into the unforeseeable future. Memmi's self-perpetuating mechanism that surpasses its users significantly invokes Primo Levi's concept of "a grey zone, with ill defined outlines which both separate and join the two camps of masters and servants" It

possesses an incredibly complicated internal structure, and contains within itself enough to confuse our need to judge." (Levi 1988: 27) Yet once again, despite Memmi's polemical attitude, this perplexing relation between the perpetrator and the victim coincides with Fanon's (1986: 110) description of the traumatic post/colonial condition of the Negro not just as being black but as being such in relation to the white.³ Not any one of the related terms, that is to say, but rather *the relation itself is the source of trauma and redemption at the same time*. Two of Europe's traumas, connected with the simultaneous oppression of its outward (colonial) and inward (Jewish) other, seem to coincide, intermingle and overlap in this regard. These two relations imply, contradict and redeem each other in manifold ways that must be examined more carefully than it was hitherto the case.

Thanks to this traumatic-redemptive intersection of the outward and the inward other, identities are in the final analysis *undermined* instead of *constituted* by the relation they (are) share(d by). Such intermixture is much more unsettling than any clear opposition between identities. "Different people are certainly hated and feared, but the timely antipathy against them is nothing compared with the hatred turned toward the greater menace of the half-different and the partially familiar." (Gilroy 2000: 106) Postponement of each term of the post/colonial relation does not allow for their establishment but opens identities, to put this in Deleuzian ambiguous terms, along the "lines of flight" toward an altogether other "people-to-come" in the remote future (Rajchman 2001: 88, 101). The unavoidable interference of this spectral, simultaneously traumatic and redemptive Other into the binary post/colonial relation contaminates the representation of the "opposite" other for each of the related terms respectively. An internal split prevents each of them to become wholly determinant of the other, in the sense of the Hegelian master/slave opposition, forcing them to function, much more paradoxically, as a condition of the other's (im)possibility (Gearhart 1990: 192). That is to say, one term simultaneously enables and disables the constitution of the other's distinctive identity by demanding for this constitution an altogether other condition always-yet-to-come. This is how the simultaneously frustrating and promising potential of identity's foundational slipperiness caused by the post/colonial relation is embodied.

In such a context one can eventually better understand why Memmi analyzes the ambiguous attitude of the oppressed that simultaneously consists of resentment and admiration (1968: 5). Far from contradicting each other, these irreconcilable feelings are connected by the "strictest internal logic" (10). The oppressed is caught into a "dual movement" be it in the form of self-rejection and worship of the oppressor or self-assertion and rejection of the oppressor. Instead of relinquishing the former, the latter form is just an inversion and insofar a continuation of it (9/10). As long as the oppression reigns these two faces of the oppressed, the revolutionary and the assimilative one, collapse into the one and the same but internally divided person (8); a phenomenon labeled by Memmi *difference within sameness*. In such a "negative-positive" way (37) his "half-different" and "partially familiar" identities - he calls himself a "half-breed" belonging completely to neither of the sides (1967: XVI; 1968: 49) - undo the dualistic frame of the Hegelian master/slave dialectic that, despite the undertaken critique, still permeates Fanon's revolutionary conception.

The emancipation of the European haunting Other

The peculiar relation *between* the apparently opposed poles that stubbornly reappear *within* each other has recently been allotted much focused attention by Giorgio Agamben, though not within the delineated post/colonial terms, as is known, but within the terms of the global "state of exception" (Agamben 2005a). In order to somehow pin down this unpindownable relation in his masterpiece *Homo Sacer*, he introduces two highly intriguing concepts: the threshold of indiscernibility or indifference (*soglia d'indifferenza*) and the zone of indistinction (*zona d'indistinzione*) (Agamben 1998: 4, 9, 18, 27, 28 etc., see esp. 63ff, 112ff., 181ff.). As both concepts enjoy an extraordinary status also in his other works pointing to the special importance they gain in his entire conception, and as they are crucial for the argument to be developed here, they deserve an attentive reconstruction.

To be sure, Agamben's work focuses on the Holocaust experience instead of the colonial one, but already Fanon made us familiar with the insight that fascism is nothing but colonialism brought home to Europe. It was engendered by colonialism implemented internally, on

the “southern intruders” scattered all over the “northern” societies and cultures. When Gayatri Spivak raised her famous question “Can the subaltern speak?”, she certainly did not mean the Jews who spoke of their condition on many occasions very eloquently. Nonetheless, in as much as subalterns, according to Gramsci, function as the non-localizable “internalized outsiders” mediating between the gate-keepers of power and the disempowered majority (Young 2001: 354), Jewish “intruders” who have been throughout their history dissipated over many European and non-European countries may be taken to have been subaltern at least in this important sense. For example, Memmi describes the Algerian Jews as “eternally hesitant candidates refusing assimilation” by the domestic populace but at the same time unable to achieve the desired identification with the colonizer (1967: 15). Identifying “as much with the colonizers as with the colonized” (1968: 48), these Jews are “the half-breed of colonization” (49). As was the case with Memmi himself who “decided to join the colonized” in Tunisia (1967: XIV; 1968: 48), such permanent inbetweenness turned the Algerian Jews also, as Fanon reports, into the allies of resistance forces or “‘the eyes and ears of the Revolution’ inside the enemy apparatus” during the war for independence (Fanon 1980: 133). As if following this trace in Memmi’s and Fanon’s work, though he astonishingly never mentions the former, Paul Gilroy also regards the Jews to be important “internal” allies in the process of “external” subaltern resistance to Western domination. He claims that “anti-Semitism and racism are closely associated in nineteenth-century historiography and remain largely unacknowledged factors in the history of human sciences” (1993: 215). In his more recent book *Against Race* he further deepens this seemingly strange association in order to, on the one hand, oppose the tendency to expel the nonwhites from the heroic narratives of European anti-Nazism (2000: 5) and, on the other hand, about the unrecognized legacy of fascism in the raciology of the European 19th century. After all, the forefather of post/colonial theory Aimé Césaire (1972: 15) pointed in that direction already in the aftermath of the Second World War by presenting Nazism as a culmination of the European “narrow and fragmentary, incomplete and biased and, all things considered, sordidly racist” “pseudo-humanism”. In his reconstruction of the philosophical prehistory of the Nazi genocide Berel Lang (1990: 1991) invokes Kant’s theory of political community in

which certain races are deprived of access to universal human selfhood and in this way put in grave jeopardy of being victimized for the benefit of this selfhood. Gilroy closely investigates the same intellectual lineage by uncovering the corporate efforts of anthropology, geography and philosophy of 19th century, in the wake of Kant, to make racial bodies testify the irrecoverable otherness. Kant himself, carefully preventing intermixtures, allocated each race its distinctive geographic position within the inclusive species of mankind, whereby the Negro was completely locked out of it. Instead of the mainstream of history, he was destined to occupy the *slave plantation* as the avatar of the forthcoming *concentration camp*. As if alluding to Agamben's main argument (although he never mentions him), Gilroy states: "Both constituted exceptional spaces where normal juridical rules and procedures had been set aside." (2000: 60)

Due to such "elective affinities" between black slaves and Jewish victims, Gilroy resolutely rejects the Eurocentric inclination to proclaim Jews *subaltern per definition*. Instead of assuring them the right to completely usurp the position of the "non-national nation" characterized by diasporic identity, the idea of special redemptive power produced through such a position connects Jewish to Black Atlantic thinkers (Gilroy 1993: 216). As is testified by the autobiography of the eighteenth-century African slave and political activist Olaudah Equiano (as quoted by Gilroy 2000: 122), since the time of European colonial adventures diaspora has turned from a particular into a world-wide destiny. The diasporic experience had already made Equiano ponder:

...here I cannot forbear suggesting what has long struck me very forcibly, namely the strong analogy, which even by this sketch, imperfect as it is, appears to prevail in manners and customs of my countrymen and those of the Jews, before they reached the Land of Promise... (Equiano 1969(2): 38)

After all, in the time of intense political competition among peoples, nations, ethnicities and groups over whose identity will be treated as being most damaged, de-racinated or traumatized, most appropriately authorized by the history of ineffable suffering, redemption must not be treated as a privilege of whatever homogeneous category taken to be its proper representative. Especially when victims are at stake, any

particular racial, national or cultural representation whatsoever has to be consistently avoided. Criticizing Levinas' idea of the Face conspicuously conceived in this representative way, Bernhard Waldenfels observes:

Is it possible to transform the infinite process of othering into a true essence? Has the plurality of beings not to be completed by the pluralization of the face, following different ways to transcend the order in question? (...) We should contextualize the otherness or - as I would say - the *Fremdheit* as well as the selfhood, not by integrating them into certain contexts, but by relating them to those contexts which are burst apart by the extra-ordinary demand of the other. This pluralization of the face would also undermine the dubious quality of what is faceful and what faceless. (2002: 71/2)

This line of argument powerfully endorses the establishment of a connection between Agamben's work and that branch of post/colonial theory delineated above. Agamben was often associated with Walter Benjamin precisely via the redemptive moment of thinking that, departing from something radically excluded from the official historical past, transforms this past into something it never was (Heller-Roazen 1999a: 1) in order to save the remembrance of its victims for the future. Nothing is more familiar to certain post/colonial thinkers. As the Afro-American sociologist Richard Wright approvingly quoted by Gilroy (1993: 192) put it

Above all feel free to improvise! The political cat can be skinned in many fashions, the building of that bridge between tribal man and the twentieth century can be done in a score of ways ... (Wright 1954: 346)

However, even more than through this important "redemptive affinity" toward a re-imagining of the past, Agamben's argument is close to Adorno's in the manner he introduces the third term of bare life (*la nuda vita*). In the way he develops it through Deleuze and Foucault in the essay *Absolute Immanence* (1999a) this third term namely enjoys a transcendental position which prevents both the subject as the first and the object as the second term to take it into any kind of representative position. Instead of the subject and the object determining their third

term from without, both of them are, that is to say, “spectrally” infected by it from within. This is why Memmi’s lived experience, to use Deleuze’s formulation (1995: 4) that equally well holds for Agamben’s bare life, “escaped all transcendence” i.e. terms of whatever Something (subject, consciousness, truth, person, or individuality). Or, to put the same thing once again in Foucault’s terms (2001: 1593), instead of opening the subject and the object onto any firm transcendence whatsoever that would reliably regulate their relationship, it roots both of them in the unexplored terrain of errancy (*mepris*). Instead of by way of an internal and spiritual lived experience (*le vécu*), Foucault stresses his distance from “human, all-too-human” phenomenology, life is comprehensible only through external and material live beings (*vivants*) which makes it fundamentally dispersive and unpredictable, anomalous and contingent, constitutively vulnerable to error and self-deceit (1593). This is why scientific knowledge with its crude opposition true/false has always-already to be enrooted in the “errors” of life and regarded as nothing but a defensive response to an ever-open possibility of fallacy (1594).

Taking recourse with his uncanny idea of lived experience in this uncertain and slippery fundament of knowledge that Foucault detected in the work of his teacher Georges Canguilhem, Memmi actually already broke with the phenomenological concept of *familiar* lived experience animated by recognizable human agency. Coupled with simultaneously innovative and errant, creative and anomalous live beings, his post/colonially divided unity of lived experience represents, despite its uneasy association (via Sartre) with the phenomenological tradition, actually an anticipation of Foucault’s and Deleuze’s late, at once trans- and subhuman concept of indeterminate life.⁴ Retroactively, it also invokes Agamben’s concept of bare life which equally escapes any particular discriminative pattern like human agency. Being thoroughly defaced, bared of any visual or verbal representation, all these concepts refer to an absolutely transcendental experience immanent to nothing and nobody but itself. According to Deleuze’s (2005: 32) explanation, Sartre’s “transcendental field without a subject” is “impersonal, absolute, immanent”. With Foucault, Deleuze and Agamben, as well as less elaborated with Memmi, the Altogether Other experiences its full emancipation.

Due to the self-sufficient character of lived experience, indeterminate or bare life, none of the particular constituents of this "mass without qualities" (Deleuze) can ever be in a full possession of it, though each nevertheless cognitively domesticates it in order to get rid of anxiety caused by its indeterminacy, uncertainty, and unfamiliarity. Although the resulting distorting comprehensions are necessary, as Foucault made clear in the above-mentioned analysis of Canguilhem's work, in the final analysis they just soothe the uncanny feeling of strangeness that irremovably persists in the perception of the other. Interestingly enough, in his analysis of racism as "one of the most widespread attitudes in the world" (1968: 197) Memmi also points to "the uneasiness and *fear aroused by differentness*. The foreigner, or even merely a man of another social class, is always somewhat strange and frightening. It is only a few short steps from fear to hostility, and from hostility to aggression... You do not forgive the foreigner until you have managed to adopt him" (201). As Derrida (1995: 68, 78) famously put it, "each other is altogether other". In this context, we should not forget that Foucault speaks about unpredictable and anomalous live beings adopted in such a "catachrestic" way in order for them to provide a reassuring truth to those who perform "adoption". This explains the manner in which "regimes of truth" as "*a sort of a solution to genuine problems, a tranquilizer for disturbances*" emerge (Memmi 1968: 201). However surprising this may appear, Memmi's "tranquilizer for disturbances" pretty well renders Foucault's conception of the regime of truth.

To come back to Agamben's point which follows Foucault as well, he regards such a "politicization of bare life" as nothing less but the "foundational event of modernity" (1998: 4). Yet he repeatedly reminds us that this modern "inclusion of bare life in the political realm" (6) implies a merciless exclusion of whatever does not fit the politically acknowledged differences. Exactly through this foreclosure of the unacceptable surplus an unwished-for complicity gets established between "the most implacable enemies", namely the included determinate life and the excluded indeterminate life (10). While the politically acknowledged life enjoys legal power, the foreclosed one gains its importance only through the retroactive unworking (*desœuvrement*) of legislated community. "In Western politics, bare life has the peculiar privilege of being that whose exclusion founds the common being of

men" (7, translation modified because it renders *la citta degli uomini*, 1995: 10, too literally as "the city of men").

Due to such inbuilt discrimination on which eventually all modern Western societies rely, the taming of immanence by transcendence is for Agamben inadmissible and has to be unremittingly *unworked*. Expectedly enough, he has no difficulties in finding allies to justify this ethical claim. "Whenever immanence is interpreted as immanent to Something", objects Deleuze to the whole Western metaphysical tradition (1994: 45), "we can be sure that this Something reintroduces the transcendent." Such a violent usurpation of the spectral Other genuine to each other and resilient to any representation holds even for Heidegger's critique of Western metaphysics, though Deleuze (1988: 110) acknowledges that the German philosopher surpasses Husserlian intentionality in favor of an all-encompassing Being. But Heidegger's critique nonetheless stops halfway entailing a metaphysical harmony instead of postmetaphysical absolute disjunction between the terms involved. Although postsubjective and postconscious in his thinking and to that extent closer to Deleuze than "any other representative of phenomenology in the twentieth century" (Agamben 1999a: 225), Heidegger is for Deleuze still not radical enough (Deleuze 1988: 113). Taking into account that the recent "tricontinental critique", particularly Dipesh Chakrabarty (2000), introduces precisely Heidegger to reconsider the post/colonial relation, the consequences of this critique in Deleuze will be carefully spelled out via Agamben's seminal reading.

As we will shortly see, this critique entails an *absolute disjunction* between the terms involved in post/colonial relation. As far as Deleuze is concerned, and here he can stand for Foucault and Agamben as well, self-sufficient indeterminate life stubbornly refuses to offer any common foothold to the identity of its inhabitants. Unfortunately, a deep anxiety over the stability of the colonizer's and colonized self that is produced through such hard resilience, instead of any redemptive unworking of this self to the benefit of the other, frequently invokes opposite attempts on both sides to violently fix this self's boundaries against the other. It seems as if such a kind of aggressive hostility toward the other does not want to disappear from human practice despite the claims for continuous self-unworking made by Agamben, Deleuze and others. Though we have hitherto concentrated only on the oppressor to illustrate

this ethically unconcerned self-encampment. Memmi (1968: 200) uncovers it practiced by the oppressed man as well. "Everyone looks for an inferior rank compared to which he appears relatively lofty and grand... He need only find someone smaller, more humiliated than himself... *Racism is a pleasure within everyone's reach.*" (200/201) Proving man's superiority through the other man's inferiority, too tempting and convenient to be resisted, racism as interpreted by Memmi amounts to a self-sufficient general structure, a compulsive mechanism of human's behavior irrespective of race, class and nation of those who demonstrate it. Such "racism", to be sure, does not pertain only to race but to other axes of oppression as well, i.e. gender, nation or class (200). One may subjectively not be aware of its all-pervading matrix of exclusion, but this only underlines its objective efficiency (87). As long as it remains unconscious, therefore, this deep-rooted discriminative matrix will "provoke continuing upheavals, costly for everyone" as well as "disastrous and useless colonial wars" (50). Instead of accusing writers for causing disturbances, objects Memmi (1967: XVIII), "it would be better to listen more attentively and take their warnings more seriously" in which case "this book could have been useful to the colonizer as well as to the colonized". In this warning concerning the real power of racism addressed by Memmi to his insufficiently enlightened audience one can hardly overhear Kant's similar cautions directed at irrationally infantile mankind that repeatedly refuses to make use of reason genuine to grown-ups.

Wars, tense and unremitting military preparations, and the resultant distress which every state must eventually feel within itself, even in the midst of peace - these are the means by which nature drives nations to make initially imperfect attempts, but finally, after many devastations, upheavals and even complete inner exhaustions of their powers, to take the step which reason could have suggested to them even without so many sad experiences - that of abandoning a lawless state of savagery and entering a federation of peoples in which every state, even the smallest, could expect to derive its security and rights not from its power or its own legal judgment, but solely from this great federation (*Fœdus Amphictyonum*), from a united power and the law-governed decisions of a united will. (Kant 1991: 47)⁵

Does the ethical claim for emptying out all discriminative terms including that of the self genuine, from Memmi and Gilroy, through to

Agamben's, Foucault's and Deleuze's line of argument, really have something to do with the apparently opposite enlightenment claim for the sovereign self? Does the ethical undoing of the self that governs the other somehow amount to an inverted political deactivation of the other that governs the self? And finally, do we here probably face yet another case of "inverted oppression" (Memmi) in which the former colonized turns into the harsh colonizer (Said 1993: 319ff.)? These important questions remain to be tackled in the following.

Nonrelation as imposed condition

Agamben engages Foucault's and Deleuze's discussion of life as transcendental experience in the already mentioned essay *Absolute Immanence*, published just a year after he had established and meticulously investigated the concept of bare life in *Homo Sacer*. As both French thinkers had already figured as a sort of "internal allies" of the undertaken research, *Absolute Immanence* may be regarded as a further probing of this unexplored terrain. This essay opens with a painstaking discussion of the punctuation of the title of Deleuze's last published paper *Immanence: A Life...*, stating that the colon indicates a dislocation of immanence in itself, a "nonrelation" between immanence and "a life" designated by Deleuze as "immanation" (1999a: 223). Following Spinoza, Deleuze displaces the origin of his key concept "immanence" from *manere* (to remain /within the same/) to *manare* (to flow out, to spring forth /into something else/). As is the case with Spinoza's "immanent cause", so with Deleuze immanence effects do not naturally *emanate* from the continuous substance of life but discontinuously and unexpectedly *spring forth* from it. This dislocating crossing of the "colon" conceived as the borderline between two disjunctive realms makes becoming (*devenir*) constitutively open toward an ever-changing alterity. "Immanence flows forth; it always, so to speak, carries a colon with it. Yet this springing forth, far from leaving itself, remains incessantly and vertiginously within itself. This is why Deleuze can state ... that 'immanence is the very vertigo of philosophy'" (226). It re-assimilates whatever it has thrown out into the unpredictable flow of its becoming.

We are here touching upon the very gist of Agamben's argument, as this place conspicuously corresponds with Benjamin's definition of

Ursprung (origin) from *The Origin of the German Mourning Play*, an admittedly important book for Agamben's intellectual trajectory (see the beginning of his second book *Stanzas*, 1977; translation 1993). According to Benjamin's stunning anticipation of Deleuze's immanence, unnoticed of course by Deleuze himself, the *Ursprung* (etymologically "the primordial leap") does not *precede* the becoming (*das Werden*) but *follows* from its intermittent flow (Benjamin 1980: 226). This not only clearly echoes the unpredictable springing forth of Deleuzian immanence but also makes this immanence into an *absolutely primordial* incessant *becoming* deprived of any substantial relation with whatever preceded it, bared of any continuity. As for the vertiginous character of this becoming, Benjamin unmistakably sets forth: the *Ursprung* stands in its flow like a whirl that engulfs the material of becoming into its rhythmic. Once the primordial leap comes up, it leaves nothing like it was before it took place. This is exactly what makes it each time *primordial*. Consequently, no one term as such is endurable but only the nonrelation of each term with all preceding terms. Interpreted in such a way, Benjamin endorses Deleuze: *There is no continuity at all, just an absolute disjunction in the becoming of the world.*

Hence this place in Agamben's essay not only disentangles the complex genealogy of his crucial concept *soglia d'indifferenza* but points to its vertiginous character as well. Namely, the *threshold of indistinction* functions within bare life equally consistently as the Deleuzian "mole of the transcendent within immanence" which the latter cannot but "disgorge ... everywhere" (Deleuze/Guattari 1994: 46/7) in the form of, one is tempted to say, Foucault's live beings. Immanence can announce itself only disguised in such a transcendent form but should by no means be reduced to it. The threshold i.e. live being is therefore a *ubiquitous instance* which, repeatedly traversed by indeterminate life or subverted by its immanence, in the place of any (abstract) determination each time establishes just "between-times (*entre-temps*), between-moments (*entre-moments*)" (Deleuze 2005: 29; 1993: 3). To reestablish Agamben's terms, the ubiquity of such transitory between-moments that primordially spring forth from the invisible becoming of the world necessarily replaces the legally established state of the world by a provisional state of exception. As no rule can establish itself without the relation of exception /to it/ (Agamben 1998: 18), *the*

rule is definitely engulfed in the whirl of exception, drawn into the unpredictable flow of its absolute immanence. To summarize, we live in a world where the unrealizable nonjuridical state of exception makes the condition of possibility of the localizable juridical order or territory (1998: 20). Each territory is always-already de-territorialized; nothing can escape the deactivating force of immanence which is thoroughly irresistible in its permanent undoing.

On the other hand, if immanence on its part cannot but everywhere “disgorge” thresholds, if it necessarily gives birth to the transcendent and incessantly introduces the finite into its infinite, this happens because the vertigo of its becoming simply demands for some radical alterity to keep moving. Therefore immanence always firstly establishes a constitutive distinction between *itself as agent* (immanent life) and *itself as patient* (transcendent live beings) in order thereupon to draw it back into the so called middle voice where agent and patient indiscernibly merge. Once again, one cannot but recall in this context Memmi’s thesis that the “good” and the revolutionary, the colonized and the decolonized Negro are “part of the same revolutionary force at the different moments of its career ... the one is called forth by the other, follows on from it and rounds it off (1968: 8). As soon as they get distinguished, that is to say, these seemingly autonomous identities collapse back into the indiscernible spectral flow that surpasses them both. This inseparability of the subject and the object of becoming explains why Agamben at this point of his argument recalls Spinoza’s “undecidable” usage of verb-as-noun (1999a: 234f.): the implementation of the middle voice occupies an important place in contemporary Western theory. (Pecora 1991, Pepper 1997, White 1999, LaCapra 2001) But, to reiterate, the distinction between the subject and the object must be firstly introduced in the medium of *live beings* in order for an overlapping of these terms in the medium of *bare life* to appear in the effect.

Like his chosen affiliates, Agamben thus ultimately establishes a *strong binary opposition* between determinate life of beings and indeterminate bare life whereby the latter term, apparently the weaker one, actually gets the upper hand as the final neutralizer of all introduced distinctions. As a pure medium of the coincidence of the subject with the object, namely, bare life cannot be thought as such. Like Derrida’s

différance or Lacan's *réel*, this "state of exception" from the life of beings is per definition indiscernible and can be considered only as an after-effect of what makes itself discernible. Yet somewhat reserved with regard to Derrida and fully silent in regard to Lacan, it seems as if Agamben prefers taking the following sentence of his "declared ally" Deleuze for the lead: "Perhaps this is the supreme act of philosophy: not so much to think THE plane of immanence as to show that it is there, unthought in every plane, and to think it in this way as the outside and inside of thought, as the not-external outside and the not-internal inside." (Deleuze/Guattari 1994: 59/60)

As the most scandalous example of this simultaneously "not-external outside" and "not-internal inside" of modern political space, Agamben in *Homo Sacer* proffers the "localized unlocalizability" of the concentration camp. "As the *absolute* space of exception", unlike Foucault's prison that is to say, "the camp is topologically different from a simple space of confinement." (Agamben 1998: 22, italics added) It paradigmatically demonstrates that sovereign law rests on the *structure of the ban*, which does not exclude but *abandons* the subaltern, i.e. exposes and threatens it at the threshold of order. (28) If we may just slightly reformulate Agamben in order to link his thesis to the post/colonial problem, the ban eventually establishes an enduring relation between the *sovereign* and the *subaltern*, whereby the latter is, being deprived of all intelligible qualities be it in the form of colonized people (not-external outside) or Jews (not-internal inside), placed outside any relation or is nonrelated (29; *I'irrelato*, 1995: 35). The ban therefore consists of a particular kind of nonrelation between the political order and a "mass without qualities" (Deleuze). As this form of nonrelation with what we might call the subaltern seems to be founding the political itself, Agamben expects forthcoming research to recognize it as its key problem. It is primarily in this sense of being *beyond any relation* that he provocatively proclaims the concentration camp to be the paradigm of European modernism (1998: 166ff.). Albeit of course not explicitly, his contention corroborates for example Paul Gilroy's (1993: 17) principal thesis according to which European modernity begins in the constitutive relationship with its harshly oppressed outsiders. It also endorses Mbembe's treatment of racism as an all-pervading invisible mechanism operating on various axes of oppression. Like Jean-Luc Nancy from

whom he takes the idea of the ban, namely, Agamben does not restrict the concentration camp to Jewish destiny but refers, for instance, to the camps during the war in former Yugoslavia. (Nancy 2000: 145ff.; Agamben 1998: 176) In the globalized state of exception anybody can become the subaltern, as was the case with Memmi's or Derrida's argumentation: "Each other is altogether other". Therefore the "lines of flight" continually draw away from definite sovereign identities toward indefinite subaltern multiplicities, from the determinate life of beings to indeterminate bare life. It is this subterranean force of exception that multiplies the "thresholds of indiscernability" or neighborhood zones between the sovereign and the subaltern inside the political territory. De-territorialization as a de-racination of enrooted territories is incessantly on its way.

In order to illustrate this mercilessly dissolving trajectory that eventually engulfs each concrete political order into its annihilating whirl, let us take an example from the third volume of *Homo Sacer, Remnants of Auschwitz*, where Agamben discusses the series of caesuras introduced during the Nazi regime with the aim of extracting the biological body of the population from the political body of people. After the people had once been extracted, people of "Arian descent" were distinguished from those of "non-Arian-descent", thereupon among people of "non-Arian descent" the proper Jews (*Volljuden*) were isolated from the hybrid ones (*Mischlinge*), the deportees from the Jews, the prisoners from the deportees, until caesuras had reached their final limit in the so called *Muselmann*, the awesome "living dead" of the concentration camp.

At the point in which the *Haftling* becomes a *Muselmann*, the biopolitics of racism so to speak transcends race, penetrating into a threshold in which it is no longer possible to establish caesuras. Here the wavering link between people and population is definitively broken, and we witness something like an absolute biopolitical substance that cannot be assigned to a particular bearer or subject, or be divided by another caesura. (Agamben 1999b: 85)

In as much as it is non-representable, this "absolute biopolitical substance" has the same function as Deleuze's or Foucault's "indeterminate life", namely mutilating all that is determinate and representable. As a *terminal leftover* of a long term normative operation, it invokes

comparison with the “negritude” that remains unsuspended after the Negro passes the painstaking “whitening” procedure that pales out his skin and uncurls his hair (Memmi 1968: 10). Being deeply frustrating from the perspective of the colonized as it implies unrequited love, this leftover is systematically produced by the colonizer in order to keep the normative machine going. Memmi accordingly cautions that “the oppressor is the first to refuse assimilation” (1968: 11) whereas Bhabha (1994: 86) corroborates: “In order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference” (89). Instead of envisaged assimilation through the desperate effacement of inherited characteristics, therefore, this “civilizing” procedure amounts to “almost the same but not white” condition, an “excess”, “slippage” or “strategic failure” (89). Like in the case of *Muselmann*, this remnant “cannot be assigned to a particular bearer or subject” because, as Bhabha puts it, “mimicry conceals no presence or identity behind its mask” (88), just infinite doubling and disavowal of a subject prevented to reach its subjecthood.

However, as one might guess from the delineated analysis of the post/colonial relation in Fanon and Memmi as well as Agamben’s rendering of the concentration camp, neither does the delineated failure genuine to mimicry leave the colonizer undamaged: “The figures of doubling ... alienate the modality and normality of those dominant discourses in which they emerge as ‘inappropriate’ colonial subjects” (Bhabha 1994: 88). “The *menace* of mimicry is its *double* vision which in disclosing the ambivalence of colonial discourse also disrupts its identity.” (88) If the colonized can never be properly represented, then in the final analysis his or her “‘partial’ representation rearticulates the whole notion of *identity* and alienates it from essence.” (89) Accordingly, the constitutive leftover of political differentiation can be interpreted with Deleuze as an indefinite intensity that forces *all* definite identities (including the colonizer’s one) to pass into indefinite multiplicities, to replace their distinctive profile with vague “neighborhood zones” /*zone de voisinage* and “thresholds of indiscernibility” /*seuil d’indiscernabilité* (1991: 25) (Deleuze/Guattari 1994: 19).

After this extensive passage through Memmi’s and Bhabha’s, Deleuze’s, Benjamin’s and Foucault’s affiliate conceptions and concordant vocabularies, we become able to discern what is in the background of

Agamben's frequent paradoxes like "distant proximity" (1999b: 125), "impossible conjunction" (130), "co-extensive non-coincidence", "indivisible partition" (151) or "intimacy of disjunction" (152). Like Deleuze's "neighborhood zone", Agamben's threshold of indistinction appears constitutively related to the subaltern condition, impossible to be pinned down because placed in the sublime area "beyond relation". What forces all distinctions that characterize live beings to finally dissolve and merge into one another are impersonal inorganic powers of this "mass without qualities" baptized by Memmi lived experience, by Foucault indeterminate life, by Agamben bare life and finally, as if paternally embracing all these self-sufficient terms, by Deleuze the One-All (*I'Un-Tout*). (Deleuze 1994: 37) Being absolutely immanent to whatever exists, maintaining with these existents a *fundamental nonrelation*, Deleuze's all-embracing One-All cannot be perceived or represented but only mutely experienced. Drawing on this ineffable experience that engraves itself upon each live being differently but irrespectively, Deleuze states that it blurs all politically instituted distinctions in its loose assemblage of permanently changing shapes or *becoming*.

As this One-All on permanent move is precisely bared of any attributes, stripped of all distinctive qualities and escaping all determination similarly like Derrida's *différance*, Lacan's *réel* or Levinas's *visage*, one is hardly astonished when Alain Badiou (2000: 22) in his lucid and congenial critique of Deleuze's philosophy describes its operative way in terms of "the neutral equality". Although he skips this reference, following quite a usual technique amongst French thinkers, it might be useful to know that this all-pervading neutralizing operation conspicuously refers to Blanchot's argument from *Infinite Conversation* (1993: 71). There he engages the concept of the neuter ("the neutral" is an inadequate English translation of *le neutre* in Blanchot 1969: 101) to designate the impersonality of writing that introduces indeterminacy into the relation between the I and the Other with the consequence of dissolving their distinctive identities. Significantly enough, Blanchot's "neuter", "impersonality" and "indeterminacy" anticipate Deleuze's and Agamben's extremely dense agglomeration of negative terms like inorganic, disjunction, indiscernability, indivisibility, indistinction, indifference whose immanent

them out or lays them bare as it releasing them in such a way or the traumatic exclusion imposed upon it.

Hence what the One-All demonstrates is, probably surprisingly, an exemplary *redemptive operation* that, according to Agamben's painstaking analysis in *The Time that Remains* (2005b; esp. Fifth Day: Eis eunagélion theoù), *carries out a systematic disempowerment of the self with the aim of empowerment of its repressed other*. This might explain why Deleuze becomes Agamben's close affiliate. In *The Time that Remains* St. Paul's theological concept *katargein* is interpreted as a temporary suspension of everyday work (on Sabbath) in order for the foreclosed energy to complete its potency. Hegel's philosophically reinterpreted *Aufhebung* (via Luther) and Blanchot's literary rewritten *désoeuvrement* (via Mallarmé) confirm that an apparently destructive procedure directed at the subject results with a consolidating effect of recuperation and renewal of what this subject-formation had left aside. However, if the power of Deleuze's One-All is engendered only as an *aftereffect* of the consistent unworking, then it cannot be, Deleuze's iterative claim notwithstanding, taken for *the primordial* indefinite intensity. Deleuze's insistence in treating it as a primordial quality suggests a redemptive self-empowerment of biopolitical substance generated by the discriminative work of the "normative machine". Its mighty hypertrophy is launched out of bared internal otherness produced as a terminal leftover of meticulous external differentiation. The latter successively separates *this* (colonizer, perpetrator, enrooted nation etc.) from *that* (colonized, victim, deracinated diaspora etc.) penetrating amidst the subject up until either "almost the same but not white" (the Negro) or "half-breed" (the Jew) is reached as a threshold beyond which no further alike caesuras can be established. Being a supreme sublimation of amorphous substance distilled through such a long-term and consistent internalization of the post/colonial relation, Deleuze's idea of the One-All could hardly have appeared before the fine tuned biopolitics of power, transplanted from world-wide colonies

live beings rests. The consistent internalization of oppression into the subject-formation outlined above in the work of Fanon, Memmi and their more recent followers, culminates in Deleuze's unprecedented globalization of this subject that gets equated with nothing less than Being.

To be sure, in order "to determine the nomination of Being as /such/ an /unbridgeable/ interval", Deleuze "proposes a fairly wide array of paired concepts" (Badiou 27).

In part, Deleuze's genius - but also the misinterpretations that his philosophy is open to (as a thought of the anarchic multiple of desires, etc.) - is linked to this multiplicity of names of Being, which is itself correlative with the unprecedented determination with which he upholds the ontological thesis of univocity and the fictive character of the multiple. For it is by the experimentation with as many nominal doublets as is necessary that the verification, under constraint, of the absolute unity of sense is wrought. (Badiou 29)

As I have tried to spell out, the same could be maintained of Agamben who also evokes a plethora of various thresholds to verify the global, all-embracing character of the basically non-representable subaltern condition taken for granted. The problem is however exactly with what Deleuze and Agamben take for granted as equally relevant and uniformly consequential for all live beings irrespective of their racial, gender, ethnic, cultural or class liabilities. That is to say, the "passionate attachment" to subaltern condition that appears redemptive to an undecidable self, may simultaneously appear unbearable to a decided self who develops a hostile attitude toward the other just because he or she experiences it as a threat of the subaltern condition. While defending his or her restricted self as the only shelter available against such an aggressive threat, not everybody is equally ready to welcome the other behind whose back lurks the Altogether Other. This is why summoning each human subject irrespectively to raise to consciousness its fundamentally subaltern condition invokes comparison with Kant's enlightenment imperative addressed to mankind to be mature in view of its common prospect. Both demands are, though each in its own time and way, connected with the *in-between disciplinary position* of discourses that raise them seeking to be legitimated in non-discursive kinds of inbetweenness. That is to say, in the same way as Kant's

transdisciplinary philosophy in *The Contest of Faculties* asks the narrow disciplinary discourses of academia to confront the totality of knowledge, so it in the unfinished “political critique” challenges the restricted ethnic cultures and national communities to face the international demands of mankind. But if the more recent idea of the global subaltern condition, in the similar fashion, could hardly have come up without a highly developed work of normative differentiation that made philosophy (in Deleuze’s and Agamben’s) and theory (in the post/colonial case) into an ambiguous leftover impossible to be clearly attached to either of the divided sides - North or South, West or East, colonizer or colonized, perpetrator or victim - then its ambiguous in-between character might strike numerous non-discursive victims of *concrete and determinate others in particular circumstances* who are due to their firmly restricted identity much less interested or able to sublimate their suffering as highly disputable indeed.

However, these restrictions of the quasi-transcendental structure of subalternness would most probably remain unrecognized had Deleuze, Agamben and post/colonial theorists not carried out their expertise in the consistently redemptive direction outlined above. Far from being simply causally linked, it follows that the trauma and its redemption are connected in the same perplexed manner as are the inward and the outward other. Healing the one inflicts wounds upon the other. Only after the globalizing of trauma had been pushed down to its extreme by Deleuze’s, Agamben’s and similar conceptions of redemption, did we become able to recognize the pitfalls of conflating the traumas suffered by determinate live beings and inflicted by other determinate beings on particular historical occasions with the Trauma caused to all of us irrespectively by absolutely castrated bare life. As was the case with national communities who liberated themselves during the heydays of nationalism, so does the emancipation of bare life feed in return its oppressive and colonizing appetites toward determinate lives; neither of these processes amounts to everybody’s profit. As LaCapra (2001: 431) repeatedly cautioned, if the structural trauma is overemphasized to the cost of the particular one, as there is a demonstrated tendency in Deleuze’s “transcendental empiricism” or Agamben’s “biopolitical absolutism”, this leads to a compulsive repetition of paradoxes that eventually, though inadvertently annihilates important social, political

and historical distinctions. The internalization of trauma into the philosophical and psychic subject-formation seems in effect to have spawned the collapse of external economic, political and cultural differences that painfully determine subjugated human lives (LaCapra 2001: 175). Yet if we don't want to downgrade the suffering of real victims - various colonized, various women, various workers, various Jews, each in its place and time — to the benefit of the “wanna-be” ones who tend to legitimate their *discursive* in-between position through an equalization with the *lived* one, then the ethics of the subaltern condition is supposed to be taken out of an exclusively internal frame of reference, putatively equally immanent to all of us, in order to be carefully reconnected to specific external circumstances without which real historical trauma appears regrettably misconceived and misinterpreted.

NOTES & REFERENCES

1. Jean-Paul Sartre was the author of the Preface to Memmi's *Portrait du Colonisé précède du Portrait du Colonisateur* (1957). To my knowledge, there is only one notable exception to the undeserved oblivion of Memmi's work, namely the essay by Suzanne Gearhart (1998) to which I remain indebted in the following interpretation.
2. These are the titles of particular chapters of Memmi's *Dominated Man*. His principle thesis in this book is that “oppressed people resemble each other ... colonized people, Jews, women, the poor show a kind of family likeness ... similar gestures, similar expressions of pain, the same inner paroxysms, the same agony or the same revolt” (1968: 16).
3. However, contrary to Memmi's hesitation to offer any definite political solution to this paradoxical relation, Fanon firmly believes in the final “disalienation of humanity” through liberation from racial divisions i.e. getting out of history. He consequently declares: “I am not a prisoner of history. I should not seek there for the meaning of my destiny... I do not have the right to allow myself to be mired in what the past has determined... The body of history does not determine a single one of my actions.” (1986: 230/1)
4. It deserves attention that Deleuze (2005: 26, 32) in his last published paper that will be closely analyzed in the following, while elaborating upon his idea of the “plane of immanence” recalls Sartre's concept of the “transcendental field”

5. One can of course find a number of similar places in Kant's political argumentation next to this one from *Idea for a Universal History*. Consider, for instance the following place from *Perpetual Peace*: "There is only one rational way in which states coexisting with other states can emerge from the lawless condition of pure warfare. Just like individual men, they must renounce their savage and lawless freedom, adapt themselves to public coercive laws, and thus form an *international state (civitas gentium)*, which would necessarily continue to grow until it embraced all the peoples of the earth." (Kant 1991: 105) Although Memmi avoids Kant's imperative tone implying only "one rational way", the consequences of an insufficiently accounted racism as he presents them lead to the same conclusion.
6. According to Paul Gilroy (2000: 284), this concept that very well fits Agamben's idea of the state of exception was proposed by the Black Atlantic expatriate Richard Wright (1964: 16/17).

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INFLUENCE OF WILLIAM JONES AND OTHER ANGLO-INDIAN WRITERS ON SHELLEY

Romantic ideals of love and romance, permanence and transcendence, and freedom and liberation found expression through a variety of modes and motifs such as Hellenism, Medievalism, Pastoralism, and Orientalism. Initially conceived as a fanciful exercise about passing curiosities of the East, Romantic orientalism came to be connected with the rise and glory of empire and the accompanying challenges and tensions, subsequently becoming more imaginative, academic, and objective. Compared with the similar writings in the past, Romantic orientalism claimed to be more realistic on account of the local details it made use of as it became more poetically interesting and suggestive at the same time. In the wake of European colonial expansion, many European writers, including the major English Romantic poets, participated in the fashionable discourse of orientalism approaching their subject matter with scholarly disinterestedness and leading to the concept of orientalism as a body of serious scholarly works on the Middle East and South Asia. Moving away from the earlier notion of the orient as a mere exotic and extravagant fantasy of cheap commercial glamour, they viewed the orient, according to Edward Said, in abstract, extracting terms, as a vague ideological rather than a historical geopolitical reality. Said, the foremost postcolonial literary critic, observed that Western writers set themselves off against the Orient “as a sort of surrogate and even underground self so that their orientalist texts tell more about their own than our Asian culture. He argued that regardless of whatever academic or scientific objectivity they might lay claim to, their writings were ultimately a deliberate attempt to distort and misrepresent the “other” in the colonized East with the end of managing, dominating, and controlling it from a morally “superior,” unscrupulous, racist, imperialist, and ethnocentric perspective.

Said's landmark theory, first laid out in his book *Orientalism* (1978), has been highly influential in the field of the postcolonial study of the relationship between literature, history and culture. However, it has also been critiqued as problematic and controversial in its so-called sweeping generalization. As pointed out by Nigel Leask, "Said falls into the trap of constructing 'the West' in exactly the same ahistorical, essentialist terms as Europe's 'Orient,' the object of his critique" and his theory fails adequately to respond to the fact that

...the "Easts" of literary orientalism are as manifold, various, and historically contingent as the "West" which produced them. Moreover, whilst Said is correct in mapping orientalism on to the historical rise of empire, he seriously overestimates the confidence and unity of purpose of European imperialists and writers, failing to register adequately the anxiety, not to mention the critical scruples, which often underwrite oriental texts.¹

Judith Coleman agrees with Leask's qualification saying:

The principal complaints are that Said's conception of orientalism is too monolithic, and his methodology too rigidly dichotomized between East and West. These limitations result not only in an Occidental stereotype of the racist Westerner but leave little scope for the multiplicity of orients imagined by hosts of writers, artists, and scholars. Nor did Said's argument take account of what was so palpable in so many orientalist texts — the anxiety of empire and its accompanying sense of European vulnerability.²

It is true that Said's somewhat overgeneralization at times ignores the other side of the coin: that oriental writings do indeed open up an exploration of the rich and complex cultural history of the East and betray a sense of ironic doubt, ambiguity, and mixed feelings not only about the East itself but also its occupation by the West. It needs to be pointed out here, however, that Said himself warned against reductionist readings of his argument that tended to be confined to "a notion on the binary opposition between the West and the Orient and a tendency to homogenize both categories."³ He never entertained positions that might let "Orientalism" be used as a derogatory term rather than a scientific concept. Nonetheless, recent scholars, as shown above, have been trying to distance themselves from the

supposedly over-reductive readings that Said made of Oriental texts.

All Orientalist writers were not equally comfortable about Western colonization of the East. This is especially true of Shelley, whose love of freedom, purity of ideals and transcendent philosophy rise far above the racist, ethnocentric and imperialist construction of an Indian East and thus defy Said's seemingly straight and clear-cut categorization. Shelley's singularly idealistic, humanist, selfless, and morally unalloyed attitude to society, together with the influences that helped him learn about the greatness of ancient Indian civilization, made him look at India with unequivocal admiration and enchantment. Far from constructing an "inferior" *other* out of it under the "superior" moral vigil of the colonial power (in the sense Said defines Orientalism), he created an India exactly the opposite — a storehouse of transcendent mythic philosophy and visionary ideals to reach out to. This enabled him to create and embrace the India of his imagination and rise above the fray of politico-historical dichotomy, with which the colonized India was so much fraught. The India that may have played into the hands of those who, in Said's view, tended to fall into the pit of misrepresentation and distortion and exaggeration was not the one he entertained and envisioned.

In critiquing Said, my contention is that Orientalist writers, be they travelers or diplomats or merchants or missionaries, instead of misrepresenting as a way of their racially-motivated strategy, were in fact truthful to their experience and to what they saw. And what they saw was indeed largely true about the culture of their colonized lands in the East as a whole. Instead of being prejudiced, they may have depicted a part only, just like any writer, which does not mean they were intentionally fragmenting, splitting, bifurcating, dissecting, slicing the East to inject race or power or they were so weak and shortsighted that they were blind to the truth and beauty of the whole. No writer is ever under the obligation of understanding and speaking the whole truth and nothing but the truth. A writer's business is to be revealingly suggestive and insightful about part or otherwise and thereby the possibilities of the rest within the demands of his craft and space.

European Orientalist writers were no exception. They learnt about us and let us learn about ourselves and our Eastern heritage — rich and long and complex as it was — both from within and without, as far

as they could, significantly contributing to the artistic utterance about the East. It was not (and can never be) the wholesale monopoly of only the native writers of one culture to educate and enlighten their people.

What follows below is a discussion of the influences on Shelley, especially Sir William Jones, whose works were an investigation of the greatness of India as a seat of one of the most ancient civilizations of the world. In 1812, Shelley ordered Jones's *Works* (1799), among nearly 70 other titles.⁴

The literary history of Orientalism goes back to the time of Chaucer's "The Man of Law's Tale" (1386), Knolles's *History of the Turks* (1603), much admired by Dr. Johnson and Lord Byron, and Purchas's *Pilgrimage* (1613), a key influence on Coleridge's oriental poem "Kubla Khan." It continued through the works of the Restoration writers such as Dryden, Waller, Milton (Persian and Indian elements in *Paradise Lost*, Bk. XI) and others dealing with India and other Easts. Since the publication of D'Herbelot's encyclopedic *Bibliothèque Orientale* (1697), Antoine Galland's *Arabian Nights Entertainment* (1704-12), and many other influential works throughout the eighteenth century,⁵ there had been a popular demand for tales of diverse Eastern origins and settings — Chinese, Arabian, Egyptian, Turkish, Persian, Indian and Abyssinian — partly for a refreshing change from whatever was familiar and conservative and partly from a desire to indulge colonialist feelings or even to suggest the opposite — freedom and liberation from all kinds of oppression and occupation, including the imperialist. Completely disregarding neoclassical restraint and discipline, such tales sometimes served to expose the folly and excesses of oriental traditions and cultures in a gothic manner and sometimes the beauty and excellence of them, indirectly implying a criticism of contemporary European Enlightenment mores and manners by contrast. At first there was a fascination for China during the most part of the 18th century, which was later replaced by an interest in Indian, Arabian or Near Eastern elements in Romantic orientalism. As pointed out by Leask, "William Hazlitt's criticism of the millionaire Beckford's collection of tacky chinoiserie seen at Fonthill Abbey" was just a telling sign of this shift of interest.⁶

India was one of the major "Easts" that occupied the attention of most orientalist. Despite the fact that it was ridiculed for its polytheism and other superstitious practices by the classically minded Western

intellectuals, they had a high regard for India as one of the most ancient civilizations of the world. While Indian metaphysics and the Indian bent towards nothingness, inwardness and passivity, philosophically speaking, were in conflict with Enlightenment reason and rationalism, it was precisely these qualities that had a great appeal for the Romantic frame of mind and with which the Romantics engaged with great enthusiasm. "Stick to the East ... The North, South, and West, have all been exhausted ... the public are orientalizing, and pave the path for you," that was what Lord Byron wrote to Thomas Moore in May 1813, quoting his "oracle" Madame de Stael, who advised him about "the only poetical policy" left to the poets. This was a year after Byron had achieved instant fame with the first two cantos of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*. While Byron and Moore were highly successful in their oriental narratives, Southey unfortunately was not. His epic romances, *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1801) and *The Curse of Kehama* (1810), furnished with scholarly footnotes, were far from being popular, but they did not fail to leave a marked influence on other longer Romantic poems such as Shelley's *Queen Mab* (1813), *Alastor* (1815), and *Prometheus Unbound* (1820) and Keats's *Endymion* (1818) in their appropriation and assimilation of Eastern elements.

Of all the English Romantic poets, Shelley's handling of Indian thought, in line with his treatment of Platonic or any other body of thought, is characteristically most idealistic, imaginative and psychologically internalized. He uses both Eastern and Western machinery in a syncretic manner to convey his abstract visionary ideas about the historical and political realities of his time. Leask has observed of Shelley that his "interest in India transcends the level of biographical anecdote" and has quoted Edgar Quinet's remark that "Shelley is completely Indian."⁸ Many earlier critics such as H. G. Rawlinson, Stoppord Brooke, James Cousins, Amiyakumar Sen, and G. Wilson Knight stressed Shelley's interest in Indian lore and experience of things of the spirit.⁹ For instance, Rawlinson, as early as 1937, found the *Vedanta* philosophy "magnificently propounded" in *Adonais*.¹⁰ Brooke considered the description of the moon in the orientalized lyrical drama *Prometheus Unbound* (IV, 206-35) as a piece of nature-myth, which might equally be said of the moon-god in Indian mythology.

Cousins noted the reflection on Prometheus's transcendental philosophy of the Indian transcendental meditation represented by the system of *yoga*. The *yoga* system involves the discipline of devotion (*bhakti-yoga*), practice of the control of body and mind, and the path of action (*karma-yoga*) as it leads to the powerful final stage of what is called *raja-yoga* — the full expression of the Will and the regeneration of the complete individual in the realm of the spirit of wisdom. Cousins also noted the influence of the oriental sage Vasishta on Prometheus's suffering condition and selfless contribution. He thought that Vasishta's concept that the mere addition of the finite to the finite did not produce the infinite seemed to have been an influence when Shelley, for example, said that "the alleviations of his state/ Prometheus gave to man, for which he hangs/ Withering in destined pain" (II.iv.98), with "alleviations" meaning different steps in the processes of civilization. If "alleviations" can be taken to mean different stages of civilization, then, in Cousins' view, those life-improving processes, finite as they were, could not proceed to their final manifestations, for their higher self, as embodied in Prometheus, was in bondage and thereby restrained from participating in the forces of creativity and further advancement.¹¹ In other words, Prometheus, who represents the principle of highest perfection, was barred from taking those forces forward to the level of ultimate accomplishments.

Sen found a deep resemblance of the *Upanishadic* thought to the progress of Prometheus's lover Asia to the limit of ultimate reality and Shelley's use of the veil image throughout to imply the difference between appearance and reality, inner truth and outer illusion. Sen also noted a parallel between the passive Indian goddess Iswara and the passive Prometheus, between the active Shakti and the active Asia, whose radiance fills the universe creating a new heaven and new earth.¹² Ellsworth Barnard suggested that Shelley's Demogorgon, in addition to many other sources, might owe something to the Hindu and Buddhist "Karma."¹³ Carl Garbo found the evidence of the concept of Nirvana — the sea of universal mind or spirit — in the concluding part of Act II (scene iv, 394-99, 565-69).¹⁴ Woodberry observed that Shelley had almost a Buddhistic sympathy with life in its humblest form (III.iii, 91-93).

The young Shelley was highly influenced by the royal physician Dr. James Lind, who "in early life was a surgeon to an East Indianman:

a wanderer in strange lands," and who had "a love of Eastern wonders" and a liking for "tricks, conundrums and queer things." Shelley recalled his debt to Dr. Lind with fervor: "I owe to that man far more than I owe to my father; he loved me and I shall never forget our long talks where he breathed the spirit of the kindest tolerance and the purest wisdom."¹⁵ Influenced by Dr. Lind, who had gathered a fine collection of Indian and other Eastern curiosities during his travels, Shelley had developed an interest in Oriental lore. In early 1818, he and Mary visited the Indian library in the British Museum. Later he wrote to Peacock inquiring about the possibility of going to India in the employ of the East India Company. Peacock replied pointing out the practical impossibility of such a project.¹⁶

However, it was the scholarly activities of Sir William Jones and the other learned members of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, founded in Calcutta in 1784, that influenced Shelley (and other Romantics) most in their use of oriental elements.¹⁷ Jones and his other colleagues were instrumental in transforming the oriental materials from a fanciful subject into a great oriental renaissance. There was a genuine pursuit of knowledge about classical India and its languages and literatures as a seat of one of the most ancient civilizations of the world. Jones's famous essays, *On the Poetry of the Eastern Nations* (included in his *Poems Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatic Languages* of 1772) and *On the Gods of Greece, Italy and India* (1784) and his *Hindu Hymns* published through the 1780s — were all an attempt to discover the greatness of ancient India and to favorably compare and integrate it with that of the West. He praised the ancient Indian (and Persian) poetry for its exulting tone and expressive ideas and recommended the study of oriental models to instill new life into the worn-out neoclassical European literature. "The Asiatics excel[led] the inhabitants of our colder regions," Jones said, "in the liveliness of their fancy and the richness of their invention" and while "Reason and Taste [were] the grand prerogatives of the European mind, the Asiatics have soared to loftier heights in the sphere of Imagination."¹⁸

Jones's works celebrated the revival and rejuvenation of Hindu culture. He thought it was possible on account of a British initiative when Britain, as he says in the *Argument to the Hymn to Lakshmi*, was "a most extensive and celebrated Empire." He and his fellow orientalis

have the credit of pioneering the idea of what Leask called “benign imperialism” and which characterized the orientalist interaction with India during the time of the increasing British colonial presence there. It finds a poetic expression in the closing lines of Jones’s just-mentioned Hymn:

Oh! bid the patient Hindu rise and live ...
 Now, stretch’d o’er ocean’s vast from happier isles,
 He sees the wand of empire, not the rod:
 Ah, may those beams, that western skies illumine,
 Disperse th’ unholy gloom!

“By 1800, then,” Leask argues, “orientalism had been transformed from the status of an exotic mercantilist commodity — a token of oriental luxury — into a form of knowledge which incorporated the iconography and mythology of Britain’s Asiatic subjects into the nation’s image repertoire, in precisely the manner demanded by William Jones.” It became more ethnographically and culturally informed as it became more critically discriminating, thereby becoming more authentic and original. It is demonstrated by the scholarly research that went into the composition of oriental poems and fictions and the long footnotes added to them.¹⁹

During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, mythology and comparative religion were among the most discussed fields questioning the notion of a solely Christian state and implying an obvious challenge to the idea of Europe as representing the only dominating cultural or religious tradition. The awareness of other cultures which came with the British and European colonization of other lands across the oceans raised the level of anxieties about the empire and threatened the Western sense of cultural pre-eminence. Despite the fact that some orientalists only served to reinforce the superiority of the Christian religion and European cultural traditions and so to confirm the legitimacy of colonial occupation, knowledge of other myths and religions, and languages and cultures was in fact a challenge to the classical and biblical traditions and deepened the doubt of the freethinkers who were already critical of the Christian hegemony.

The question of the origins of the European peoples had been the subject of intensive debate for some time, especially during the French Enlightenment tradition when, apart from the accounts of other cultures

and traditions (such as those of native Americans, Pacific or Polynesian islanders, the Norse and Celtic myths, and the ancient Icelandic sagas). India proved to be an especially interesting storehouse of knowledge and information. The biblical narrative, instead of being regarded as older in time, was considered to have derived from Hindu or Egyptian sources. Added to the pagan myths of Greek and Roman origin were the ancient cults of the East, both imparting a new immediacy and universality to each other and both having great similarities with each other.

Jesuit missionaries such as John Holwell and Alexander Dow, among other Western pioneers in Indian scholarship, had an Enlightenment inclination towards deism and hence a tolerant, universalistic outlook, which made it possible for them to give a highly favorable account of the religious and philosophical ideas of India. They encouraged the belief that India was the source of all wisdom and that it had profoundly influenced the philosophical traditions of Ancient Greece. Their writings were influential with Voltaire (1694-1778) and helped him form his views on the antiquity of Indian religion and civilization. Voltaire held up Hinduism as an example of a natural deistic religion with origins older than those of Judaism and Christianity. Anquetil Duperron (1723-1805), who visited India between 1754 and 1761, developed an appreciation for diversities of culture and tradition and an openness for broad comparisons among them beyond the limits of Eurocentric orthodoxy. This openness was evident in his recommendation that Indian classics be treated and studied with equal importance as given to those of Greece and Rome and that the teachings of the Upanishads be taken seriously rather than read for merely antiquarian interest. He was indeed one of the first thinkers to draw attention to parallels between Indian and Judaeo-Christian ideas. Of particular importance was the connection he made between Indian Brahmin philosophy and the German philosopher Kant's transcendental idealism. He became one of the favourite readings of another German philosopher, Arthur Schopenhauer, who also was greatly influenced by Indian thought.

One of the most important themes running through Jones's writings on India and translations of Indian texts was the claim that European and Indian languages bore remarkable resemblances to each other. His discovery of the affinity of Sanskrit with Greek and Latin, proclaimed

in his *Third Anniversary Discourse* to the Asiatic Society on 2 February 1786, laid the foundations of historical and comparative linguistics. He argued that Sanskrit was “more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin and more exquisitely refined than either, yet bearing to both of them a stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs and in the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident.”²⁰ Such a historical kinship based on grammatical structure rather than the etymological method of Jacob Bryant’s *A New System; or Analysis of Ancient Mythology* (1775), the source of his discourse, pointed to the probability that all three languages may have “sprung from some common source.” Jones’s thesis of the Indo-European family of languages made it possible to make intercultural comparisons and contrasts with a far more solid basis than before.

Following the same line of argument about linguistic similarities, Jones conjectured that the European and Indian races may have sprung from a common source. As shown in the brief historical background above, he was an heir to over a century of speculation about migrations from Asia, but with his knowledge of Sanskrit he was able to bring more precision and authenticity to these speculations. In his *Ninth Anniversary Discourse on the Origin and Families of Nations* Jones argued that there was “incontestable proof... that the first race of Persians and Indians, to whom we may add the Romans and Greeks, the Goths, and the old Egyptians or Ethiops, originally spoke the same language and professed the same popular faith,”²¹ suggesting that Iran was the common place of origin and thus asking to exercise more caution in accepting the biblical account asserted by Bryant in his *Analysis*.

Bryant dismissed ancient pagan myths, idolatrous solar rituals, and thereby the whole sceptical tradition of natural, erotic, allegorical and astronomical meanings as distortions of Noah’s original monotheism following the catastrophic Flood. He stressed on the authority of the Bible and the primacy of the biblical tradition, highlighting the significance of Ham, whose Cushite generations, through his wicked grandson Nimrod, builder of the tower of Babel, settled all over the world in the way of colonial occupation, preserving and disseminating its original language. Bryant argued that the whole range of ancient civilizations were all of Cushite descent, a fact etymologically supported by the Cushite roots of their languages. It is this discovery of

etymological similarity, which, while lacking in convincing proof in consideration of the fact that he had no knowledge of oriental languages, made him argue that Noah was the original of a range of ancient mythological figures from Prometheus to Osiris.

On the other hand, armed with his knowledge of a number of oriental languages including Arabic, Persian, and Sanskrit, Jones provided a scholarly critique of Bryant's argument and rejected his notion that ancient myths were actually distorted memorials of Noah and his family. When he said that "the whole crowd of gods and goddesses in ancient Rome and modern Varanes [in India] mean only the powers of nature, and principally those of the SUN," he came strikingly close to the allegorical and intellectual freethinking position of sceptics such as Erasmus Darwin and Constantin Volney, the latter arguing in his *The Ruins, or a Survey of the Revolutions of Empires* (1791) that the "Gods, who act such singular parts in every system, are no other than the physical powers of nature, the elements, the winds, the meteors, the stars, all of which have been personified by the necessary mechanism of language, and the manner in which objects are conceived by the understanding."²²

Jones, however, did not belong to the radical, naturalist, and libertine tradition of skeptics nor did he side with religious conservatives as he was careful in endorsing or defending the full prior authority of the Bible too.²³ Accepting the Deluge as "a historical fact admitted as true by every nation," he believed that the children of Ham, Shem, and Japhet had settled in Iran but gradually lost their common original language, a process commemorated in the tower of Babel episode in Genesis. Only the children of Shem — the Jews — maintained the record of universal history in an uncorrupted form. Jones concurred with Bryant in his account of the Christian diffusionist tradition according to which all the peoples of the world descended from the survivors of the Flood and the Cushite children of Ham — "the most ingenious and enterprising of the three, but the most arrogant, cruel and idolatrous" — spread into India, China, America, Egypt, the Mediterranean, and Scandinavia, preserving the common linguistic and mythological heritage.

Jones had explored the matter in his deeply syncretic "The Gods of Greece, Italy and India," which established a direct relationship between the Romantic interest in Hellenistic culture as shown by Shelley,

Keats, Peacock and Barry Cornwall and the "oriental renaissance" inaugurated by himself and his fellow scholars of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. The influential essay, built on his discovery of the common linguistic roots of Sanskrit and European languages, compared the Hindu with the Greco-Roman classical pantheon, concluding that the gods worshipped under different names were in fact identical. It was thus a pioneering exercise in mythographical syncretism identifying the Hindu and Greco-Roman pantheons as similar. The synthesizing argument had a powerful influence on Shelley who exploited the analogy between Greek and Hindu deities in *Prometheus Unbound* and represented Prometheus's rebellion against the tyrannical Jupiter as a geopolitical reunification of the "European" hero with his lover "Asia." Drawing on the sceptical tradition of exposing the primitivism and irrationalism of Christian orthodoxy, *Prometheus Unbound* suggested how closely linked Shelley's admiration for classical Greece in *Hellas* was to the search for the Asiatic roots of Greek myth.

Jones's liberating ideas opening up a new world of knowledge and learning about the East, especially India, were to have a great influence on the contemporary European mind and forced it to rethink its sense of complacent superiority more critically. The German Romantic scholar Friedrich Schlegel, after reading Jones's work, exclaimed: "Everything, absolutely everything, is of Indian origin!" The Indo-European "Aryan" tradition provided German intellectuals with a more ancient and spiritual heritage than the "Frenchified" civilizations of the Mediterranean. This was very useful to the Romantics who wanted to break out of what they saw as the narrowness of the Judeo-Christian tradition and marked a further step towards a more universal conception of humanity. It was vital in shaping the intellectual background of the oriental writings of Walter Savage Landor, Robert Southey, Lord Byron, Shelley, and Thomas Moore, who "adapted [Jones's] forms, themes, style, and subject matter, preceded by the fantastic evocations of Eblis in William Beckford's famous novel *Vathek* (1784), which was itself influenced by Jones's evocation of the dreamworld of pleasure."²⁴ Jones's translation, in 1790, of Kalidasa's *Sakuntala*, the most famous specimen of dramatic literature from classical India, profoundly influenced European poetry from Shelley's *Alastor* to Goethe's *Faust*. The curse, the spirits, pastoral setting, defeat

of the enemy, and the final reconciliation of Dushyanta and Sakuntala in the realm of the immortals have been variously worked out in *Prometheus Unbound*.

Shelley's romantic orientalism avoids being realistic and defies categorization in terms of the elements of typical or general cultural traditions. This sets him apart from other Romantic poets like Southey, Byron, or Moore. His orientalist quest romances such as *Alastor*, *The Revolt of Islam* and *Prometheus Unbound* are all internalized versions of the drama of cultural encounter taking place in the realm of dream and exhibiting a psychological quest for the feminized "epispsychidion" or "soul within a soul". His visionary thoughts and ideas show a great influence of Jones's well-received allegorical *Hindu Hymns* written over a number of years before they were first published in 1785, then 1810, 1816 and 1818. The nine *Hymns* addressed to nine Indian deities take their subject matter from Indian mythology and religion but in spirit and style they are a reworking of elements from diverse sources such as Plato, Pindar, Milton, Pope, Gray and the Bible.²⁵ Garland Cannon is of the opinion that the *Hymn to Lakshmi*, which was inspired by the *Bhagavad-Gita*, foreshadowed Shelley in its allegorization of Lakshmi's qualities as the world's great mother and preserving power of nature.²⁶ The reconciliation of Durga with her lover Siva in a mystic wood, the tribute paid to the sun god Surya by using many of his Sanskrit epithets, the description of Ganga's fabulous birth, her wanderings and nuptials with Brahma's son, the vision of the wonders of Indra, god of the abode of immortals in the firmament and his "empyrean train... mounted on the sun's bright beam," and the beautiful allegorical pictures of Kamdeo, the Indian Cupid and his being reduced to a mental essence when he attempts to wound Mahadeo suggested a possibility that the hymns were an influence behind the formation of much of Shelley's symbolic expression used to convey his ideal dreams and abstract ideas. Jones's imagery of the caves as when in the *Hymn to Surya* he says the sun-god Surya "Draws orient knowledge from its fountains pure, Through caves obstructed long and paths too long obscure..." is very common in Shelley and Coleridge, who use it to suggest the sources of metaphysical speculations and transcendent love.

According to De Sola Pinto, Shelley's transition from his early atheistic materialism to the mystical pantheism of his mature works was

largely due to a study of Jones's writings.²⁷ Pinto also points out a great similarity in style between Shelley and Jones. For example, the "Champak odors" falling "Like sweet thoughts in a dream" in Shelley's "The Indian Serenade," champak being a kind of magnolia-like flower, derived from Jones's *Hymn to Indra*. Shelley's poem, in which an East-Indian young woman is singing a serenade, is a dramatic imitation of an Oriental love-song of Turkish origin translated by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu.²⁸ The Indian woman's love-dream is melting like the champaka's odor. Shelley himself acknowledged that he took the reference to the gold-coloured flower from Jones who had mentioned about how its elegant appearance on the black hair of Indian women supplied the Sanskrit poets with elegant allusions.²⁹

Similarly, the description of Love as a "planet-crested shape" with "lightning braided pinions" in *Prometheus Unbound* is reminiscent of Jones's "starry-crowned" Kamdeo with "locks in braids ethereal streaming."³⁰ Shelley's Queen Mab arrives to curb her swift coursers by the use of her "lines of rainbow light" (i.54), which was probably hinted at by Jones's "Such heaven-spun threads of color'd light serene / As tinge the reins, which Arun guides" (*Hymn to Surya*).³¹ Shelley must have read *Hymn to Kamdeo* before June 21st of 1811 when he wrote to Elizabeth Kitchener about the "sacrifice" he was making at "the altar of the Indian Kamdeo." The last and best-known *Hymn to Narayana* with its description of the most divine attributes of the Supreme Being and His manifestation in different forms suggesting various archetypal ideas and the perception of primary and secondary qualities through Narayana's chief epithets was perhaps the most influential with Shelley. As Hewitt points out, the form of this hymn inspired that of Shelley's *Intellectual Beauty*.³² Jones's description of the remote, primeval deity may have been the inspiration for Keats's opening lines in *Hyperion*.³³

Another influence on Shelley was Jones's *The Palace of Fortune* (1769), taken from a number of Indian and Eastern sources. In the poem, the abstract characters in the form of Pleasure, Glory, Riches and Knowledge are destroyed by the very wishes they sought to be granted, the moral being that human wishes are vain and empty. The discontented maiden Maia, whose name means illusion, well understands the great moral lesson after seeing what happened to those personified characters. Like the earlier *The House of Superstition* (1762) by Thomas Denton,

Jones's poem exploits an enchanting dream-vision and the associated psychological complexities adapted from Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*. In both Denton and Jones, a human protagonist becomes magically transported to a celestial fairy world where he observes the universal conflicts in the human mind between the attractions of sensual pleasure and the call of duty.

Shelley must have read Jones's *The Palace of Fortune* before writing the description of Queen Mab's palace (ll. 29-39).³⁴ In a letter to Elizabeth Kitchener, dated June 11, 1811, Shelley referred to "the true style of Hindoostanish devotion," alluding to Jones's poem. E. Koepfel and Marie Meester remarked on the similarities between *The Palace of Fortune* and *Queen Mab*: both poems tell of a sleeping maiden (Ianthe in *Queen Mab*), who is taken up to a fairy-court by a supernatural figure (the goddess Fortune in Jones's poem; the queen of spirits Queen Mab in Shelley's poem) and who is shown realistic visions by the supernatural figure, who seems to know all about mankind."³⁵ Both critics said that Shelley took the idea of his two women, Ianthe and Queen Mab, from Jones's poem and explained other similarities in thought and expression.

Shelley was also influenced by the work of Captain Francis Wilford, a fellow member of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, who represented the most extravagant development of Jones's linguistic research. Wilford claimed that all European myths were of Hindu origin and that India had produced a Christ whose life and works closely resembled the Christ of the Bible. The ten articles which he contributed to *Asiatic Researches* between 1799 and 1810 provided a rich source for poets like Southey and Shelley. Unlike the cautious Jones, who paralleled only Hindu and Greco-Roman traditions, Wilford was more interested in tracing parallels between Hindu and Jewish traditions. He claimed to have discovered a Sanskrit version of the story of Noah. In "Mount Caucasus" (1801), Wilford argued for a Himalayan location of Mt. Ararat, claiming that "Ararat" was etymologically linked with "Aryavarta," a Sanskrit name for India. Shelley embraced Wilford's thesis with enthusiasm: he set both his *Alastor* and *Prometheus Unbound* in Wilford's Hindu Kush and Cashmere.³⁶ In *Alastor*, the poet-protagonist's journey takes him back through human history (that is, Arabia, Persia, over the Hindu Kush mountains, which form the Indian Caucasus extending from Afghanistan to Kashmir in north west India) to "the thrilling secrets of the birth of time" (l.128).

In *Prometheus Unbound* too, Shelley moves the location from the Russian Caucasus on the Caspian to the Indian Caucasus "as the scene for his drama because it was thought to be the cradle of civilization."³⁷ It makes him contemplate a world of "thrice three hundred thousand years" (1.74) and "boundless space and time" (1.301). The "eagle-baffling mountain/ Black, wintry, déad, unmeasured; without herb/ Insect, or beast, or shape or sound of life" (11.20-22) to which Prometheus had been bound for three thousand years was believed, Duncan Wu notes, to have been the original home of the human race, and was associated with the golden age, thus being appropriate as the location for the birth of a second golden age.³⁸ Commenting on the metaphysical aspect of *Prometheus Unbound*, Mary Shelley said what was akin to the spirit of Indian metaphysics, "Shelley develops, more particularly in the lyrics of this drama, his abstruse and imaginative theories with regard to the Creation. It requires a mind as subtle and penetrating as his own to understand the mystic meanings scattered throughout the poem. They elude the ordinary reader by their abstraction and delicacy of distinction, but they are far from vague... He considered these philosophical views of mind and nature to be instinct with the intensest spirit of poetry."³⁹ In *Prometheus Unbound* the Greek Prometheus has been redefined as a syncretic figure analogous to the Greek Dionysus, the Persian Zoroaster, the Jewish Noah and the Hindu Rama. Wilford's essays made one ask the subversive question of "whether the Hindu Brahmins borrowed from Moses or Moses from the Hindu Brahmins."

For some of his Indian elements Shelley owes a great debt to James Henry Lawrence, a friend of William Godwin, both of whom were members of the radical Newton-Boinville circle in the early 1800s. Shelley wrote to Lawrence twice and met him more than once. In line with the Godwinian philosophy, Lawrence was an advocate of a feminist and free love theory. His four-volume romance, *The Empire of the Nairs; or the Rights of Women. A Utopian Romance* (1811), is an illustration of the matriarchal and matrilineal practices of the Nair people of the Malabar coast in Kerala, a noble caste of Hindus who had come under the rule of the East India Company in 1792. The work, which was originally published in German in 1801, came to be regarded as an extraordinary feminist tract after Mary Wolstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792). Dismissing the anti utopian position of Thomas

Maethus's *Essay on Population* (1798) in which he argued that the geometric rise in population due to the uncontrollable desire to procreate would defeat every effort to help the poor, Lawrence recounted the endless evils of the existing European system of marriage and approvingly described the sexual customs of the vibrant South Asian community of the Nairs in *The Empire*. The novel left a deep influence on the young Percy Shelley, who read it more than once and thought it was the greatest argument against matrimony. In a letter to Lawrence enclosed with a separate letter to his publisher Thomas Hookam of August 17, 1812, Shelley enthusiastically declared himself "a complete convert" to Lawrence's doctrines which called for the abolition of marriage as a form of licensed prostitution, and for inheritance and child-raising to be the responsibility of the mother. In the letter to Hookam, Shelley said, "I have read his Empire of the Nairs, nay, have it, perfectly and decidedly do I subscribe to the truth of the principles which it is desired to establish."⁴⁰

Shelley was to adapt and incorporate Lawrence's critique of Christian marriage and other elements of his plot and imagery in *Queen Mab*, *Laon and Cythna*, and *Rosalind and Helen*.⁴¹ Although a liberal attitude towards marriage and the insistence that unions be bonded by love and affection rather than by financial consideration were common in 18th century writings, the radical Lawrence and Shelley were for complete sexual freedom, where motherhood of any type was highly rewarded and the concept of "father" was unknown. In their free-love Utopia, like most of the Utopias of discovery, primitivism was equated with virtue and the path of "nature" formed the basis of a romantic ideal of love. But this same ideal also implied a turning away from the tradition of impractical and artificial courtly love and chivalric romanticism, with its inflated conception of female virtue or male constancy.⁴²

Shelley drew inspiration from his reading of Lady Morgan's novel *The Missionary* (1811), on which he wrote, the same year, "The only thing that has interested me ... has been one novel. It is Miss Owenson's Missionary, an Indian Tale. Will you read it? It is really a divine thing. Since I have read this book I have read no other — but I have thought strangely."⁴³ In the view of Leask, Morgan's tale of the love between Illarton, a Portuguese missionary in India, and the priestess Luxima (Lakshmi), is an allegory of the desire for union between cultural

opposites: "Anticipating the Byron/Moore plot resolution, Luxima is killed by Catholic bigots and the grieving missionary Hilarion retires to a cave in Kashmir to venerate her memory, true to Morgan's liberal opposition to evangelical activity in British India."⁴⁴

Shelley's *Alastor* owes some of its scenery and much of its basic idea to Owenson's novel, which, as mentioned above, is the story of a priest who tries to lead a life of isolated high idealism, who forsakes this way of life to follow Ideal Beauty in the form of a beautiful priestess and thereby comes to ruin. The novel contains journeys and wonderful scenery, including a Tartar horse; so does *Alastor*. The meeting of Hilarion and Luxima in the sacred glen suggests the closing episode of Shelley's poem. Both works have a common moral: that meditative introspection may lead to the pursuit of virtue but too much of it causes gloom, depression and disaster.⁴⁵

The quest narrative in *Alastor* describes the journey the protagonist undertakes to the East in search of self-knowledge and this involves the discovery of the "thrilling secrets of the birth of time." Shelley's version of the erotic encounter in the vale of Kashmir, Leask argues, is clearly a dream vision in which the visionary maid is represented "as a prophetess of secular republican, rather than orientalist, enlightenment." He continues, saying that Keats's narrative poem *Endymion*, written in response to Shelley's *Alastor*, reworks the quest romance structure and yields to the orientalist fashion by affording an important role to the Indian Maid in the poem's final book. In the syncretic fabric of *Prometheus Unbound*, again to follow Leask's observations, Shelley's quest romance takes place in the oriental setting of Hindu Kush, far away from the setting of his source, Aeschylus' tragedy, with the Caucasian Prometheus's lover named "Asia". This time the lovers end in triumph, reunited in the cave after the fall of Jupiter, the symbol of tyranny, imperialist power and oppression and religious dogma. Jupiter's drinking of the "Daedal cup" (*PU*, III. i. 26-32) and his being overthrown are based on the evil king Kehama's draining of the "Amreeta Cup" at the end of Southey's Hindu epic, *The Curse of Kehama*.

As noted at the beginning of this essay, Romantic orientalism coincided with the growth and development of a scholarly discourse about the East in the wake of European colonial expansion. According to Edward Said, this discipline of scholarly discourse known as orientalism

was invented to support the larger imperialist project of making the process of colonization more successful and lasting. As discussed above, this new enterprise cannot be said to be true in the case of Shelley, whose agenda did not include exporting and universalizing Western culture in the East. In his visionary love of freedom, he transcended Western imperial ambitions and came to be critical of a Western mode for allowing the domination of the Orient. His discourse of orientalism was without the pretension of knowing the East to disseminate distortions about the East; it was rather a sympathetic effort at the understanding and exploration of the East which was as great and old, if not greater and older, as the Western sources of knowledge and civilization and needed to be integrated and assimilated with the latter.

NOTES & REFERENCES

1. Leask, Nigel, "Easts," *Romanticism: An Oxford Guide*, ed. Nicholas Roe (Oxford University Press, 2005) p. 138-39. Also see Nigel Leask, *British Romantic Writers and the East: Anxieties of Empire* (Cambridge University Press, 1992).
2. Roe, p. 247.
3. See Said's disclaimer in the 1995 afterword to his book *Orientalism*. Also Edward Said, "Orientalism and After." Interview with Anne Beezer and Peter Osborne, *Radical Philosophy* (London, 1995). Repr. in Gauri Viswanathan, ed., *Power, Politics and Culture: Interviews with Edward Said* (London: Bloomsbury, 2004, repr. 2005) pp. 208-232.
4. Ivey White, Newman, *Shelley* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1940) Vol. I, p. 243.
5. Mention may be made of Montesquieu's *Persian Letters* (1721) and *Spirit of the Laws* (1748), Lord Lyttleton's *Persian Letters* (1735), William Collins' *Persian Eclogues* (1742, later as *Oriental Eclogues* in 1757), Horace Walpole's *Letters from Xo-Ho* (1757), William Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World* (1762), John Hawkesworth's highly successful *Almorán and Hamet* (1761), and *Account of the Voyages ... in the Southern Hemisphere* (1773), Alexander Dow's *Tales of Inatulla of Delhi* and *The History of Hindostan* (both 1768), his *Zingis* (a drama, 1769), and *Sethona* (also a drama, 1774), Frances Sheridan's "Persian" *History of Nourjahad* (1767), a successful moral oriental novel, staged as a musical play, *Illusion* in 1813, Samuel Johnson's *Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia* (1759), Anquetil Duperron's French translation of the Zoroastrian *Zend-Avesta* in 1759

- (English translation in 1771), *Travels in India*, and the *Upanishads* in 1786. Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World* (1762). Sir William Jones's essays and translations directly from Eastern origins in the 1780s, and William Robertson's *Historical Disquisition on Ancient India* (1791).
6. Roe, Nicholas, p. 140.
 7. Clarke, J. J., *Oriental Enlightenment: The Encounter Between Asian and Western Thought* (London: Routledge, 1997) p. 54-55.
 8. Leask, p. 71.
 9. Brooke, Stoppord, *Lyrics of Shelley: Studies in Poetry* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1907) p. 153; James H. Cousins, *The Work Promethean: Interpretations and Approaches of Shelley's Poetry* (Madras: Ganesh & Co, 1933) p. 35-36, 43; Amiyakumar Sen, *Studies in Shelley* (Calcutta U. Press, 1936) pp. 243-70; G. Wilson Knight, *Starlit Dome* (London: Oxford University Press, 1941) p. 211. All these critics have been noted in John Zillman, *Shelley's Prometheus Unbound: A Variorum Edition* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1959).
 10. Clarke, p. 59.
 11. Cousins, p. 35-36.
 12. Sen finds evidence of this in the following passages — the concluding lines of I, 827-33; II. iii, 72-81; II, v, 26-30; III. iv, 190-204.
 13. Barnard, Ellsworth, *Shelley: Selected Poems, Essays and Letters* (New York: Odyssey Press, 1944) p. 86.
 14. Garbo, Carl, *A Newton Among Poets: Shelley's Use of Science in "Prometheus Unbound"* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1930).
 15. Quoted from Edward Dowden (*Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley*) in Walter Edwin Peck, *Shelley: His Life and Work* (Boston & New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1926) Vol. I, p. 23.
 16. See Peacock's letter to Shelley, October (no date), 1821 in *Works of Thomas Love Peacock*, ed. H.F.B. Brett-Smith & C.E. Jones, London, 1934, VIII, 225-6. Also mentioned in White, Vol. II, p. 327.
 17. Other well-known members of the Asiatic Society include Nathaniel Halhed (1751-1830), Charles Wilkins (1749-1836), who produced in 1785 the first translation of the great Hindu epic the Bhagavat-Gita, and Thomas Colebrooke (1765-1837), who wrote essays on the religion and philosophy of the Hindus. Robert Southey acknowledges his debt to Jones in the Preface to *The Curse of Kehama* and in at least a dozen notes to that poem.
 18. Quoted in Roe, p. 141.
 19. Samuel Henley's notes to Beckford's *Vathek* (1786) drawing upon the writings of Jones and other sources, Elizabeth Hamilton's notes to her epistolary novel *Letters of a Hindoo Rajah* (1797) drawing upon the work of the Asiatic Society and prefaced by a "Dissertation on the History,

Religion and Manners of the Hindoos," Southey's *Curse of Kehama* (1810) following a decade of laborious research into orientalist sources and its complicated set of notes, Byron's Eastern tales and the notes added to them and Moore's *Lalla Rookh* and its notes are some of the examples of how the new Romantic orientalism was rooted in a conscious appreciation for the reality of cultural and ethnographic details.

20. Quoted in Garland H. Cannon, *Sir William Jones: An Annotated Bibliography of His Work* (Honolulu: U of Hawaii Press, 1952) [UMI Books on Demand, printed in 2007] p. 45.
21. Quoted in Clarke, p. 58.
22. Quoted in Iain McCalman (ed.), *An Oxford Companion to the Romantic Age: British Culture 1776-1832* (Oxford University Press, 1999) pp. 339-41.
23. The European sceptical tradition was represented by Pierre Bayle (1647-1706), Voltaire (1694-1778), Jean-Sylvain Bailly (1736-93), Erasmus Darwin (1731-1802), Pierre Francois D'Hancarville (1719-1805), Sir William Hamilton (1730-1803), Charles Dupuis (1742-1809), Thomas Paine (1737-1809), Constantin Francois Volney (1757-1820), Richard Payne Knight (1751-1824), Louis Langles (1763-1824), Sir William Drummond (1770-1828), the Revd Robert Taylor (1784-1844), also called the "Devil's Chaplain," and G. S. Faber (1773-1854), among others, all of whom sought to undermine the chronological and spiritual priority of the Bible by often maintaining a polytheistic account of cultural and religious origins and that the biblical narrative had derived from Hindu (Vedantic) or Egyptian sources and that the Hindu chronology was superior to the Mosaic one. Jones disagreed with them.
24. Cannon, Garland, "Oriental Jones," *Objects of Enquiry: The Life, Contributions, and Influences of Sir William Jones*, ed. Garland Cannon and Kevin R. Brine (New York: NYU Press, 1995) p. 41.
25. For example, while the *Hymns* to Durga and Bhavani use the manner and style of Pindar's Nemean Odes, *Hymn to Ganga* shows the measure and diction of Gray.
26. Cannon, Garland, *The Life and Mind of Oriental Jones* (Cambridge: CUP, 1990). The present reference is to the digitally printed first paperback version 2006, p. 236.
27. Pinto, V. De Sola, "Sir William Jones and English Literature," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London, XI. 4 (1946) p. 694. Coleridge, after an initial, youthful idealization of India, rejected Indian philosophy as a form of pantheism. See John Drew, *India and the Romantic Imagination* (OUP, 1987) p. 186-8.

28. See her letter of 1 April 1717.
29. *Shelley: Shorter Poems and Lyrics* (A Casebook), ed. Patrick Swinden (Macmillan, 1976) p. 187, 195.
30. Pinto, p. 692.
31. By his own admission, Southey was indebted to Jones's picture in his description of the same character as one who "check'd the rainbow reins" in *The Curse of Kehama* (VII, St. 7).
32. Hewitt, R. M., "Harmonious Jones." *Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association*, 28: 42-59 (1942) p. 57.
33. Sharp, H., "Anglo-Indian Verse," *Essays by Diverse Hands*, 16: 93-116 (1937) p. 100.
34. The same poem (*The Palace of Fortune*) furnished Southey with many images in his account of the chariot of Arvalan and his description of Glendoveer in *The Curse of Kehama* (XI, 12 & VII, 4).
35. E. de Meester, Marie, *Oriental Influences in the English Literature of the Early Nineteenth Century* (U. of Heidelberg, 1915) pp. 38 and following; E. Koeppel, "Shelley's Queen Mab and Sir William Jones's 'The Palace of Fortune,'" *Englische Studien*, 28, pp. 43-53.
36. McCaiman, p. 341-42.
37. O'Neill, Michael, "P. B. Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*" *A Companion to Romanticism*, ed. Duncan Wu (UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1998) p. 264.
38. Wu, Duncan, ed., *Romanticism An Anthology*, Second Ed. (UK: Blackwell 1999) p. 867.
39. Quoted in Russell Noyes, ed., *English Romantic Poetry and Prose* (New York: OUP, 1956; sixteenth printing 1980) p. 982.
40. White, pp. 241-42. Also, *The Letters of P B Shelley*, ed. Frederick L. Jones, (Oxford University Press, 1964) I, 322-23.
41. Edwin Peck, Walter, "Shelley's Indebtedness to Sir Thomas Lawrence," *MLN*, 40 (1925), 246-49; Walter Graham, "Shelley and the Empire of the Nairs," *PMLA*, 40 (1925) 881-91.
42. Mary Shelley also read Lawrence but was less impressed by his Utopian program, which she partially parodied in *Frankenstein*. See D. S. Neff, "The 'paradise of the mothersons': *Frankenstein* and *The Empire of the Nairs*," *The Journal of English and Germanic Philosophy*, 4/11/1996.
43. See Shelley's letter to Hogg, June 27, 1811 in White, 140, 144, 147.
44. Roe, p. 145.
45. For more details of the connection between *The Missionary* and *Alastor*, see A. M. D. Hughes, "Some Recent English Shelley Literature," *Englische Studien*, XIV (1912), 293-9.

“WHICH IS THE REAL ONE?” SOME CONSIDERATIONS CONCERNING THE NOTION OF REALITY IN POETRY

“Which is the Real One?” - this quotation refers to the title of a poem by the French poet Charles Baudelaire¹. The poem demonstrates that the distinction between fiction and reality has no foundation in poetry. The prose poem of Baudelaire conjures “a certain Benedicta” who is “too beautiful to live for a long time”. Hence the poetic subject must bury her shortly after having seen her. While his eyes persist in fixing the tomb, “a small person” appears with the features of the deceased. In a hysteric and bizarre manner, she violently stamps on the fresh earth saying to him while “bursting into laughter” that she is the real Benedicta, a “famous rascal” (“canaille”), and that he must love her as he has been blind. The poetic subject refuses and thus stays forever attached “to the ideal grave”. Thus, the end of the prose poem demonstrates once again the revocation of the opposition between fiction and reality which Baudelaire considers as the distinction between an idealistic beauty and the ugliness of the world. It is true, the clear identification of the opposite parts is possible. But the opposition does not work any more. Indeed, on which side would fiction be, on which side reality? The enormous differences invite us to conclude without hesitating, and in modern times even faster than ever, as the ideal for us can only be related to fiction. But despite these differences, we must realize that the two women resemble one another “in a strange way”. That is to say that the opposition does not exist in poetry and that the differences are purely anecdotic, incidental.

What about fictionality of poetry itself? Concerning literary theories, the answer is not as clear as we could have imagined. On the contrary, it changes with the epochs, the theories, the methods which leads Roman

Jakobson to conclude as follows: "I have already said that the contents of the notion of poetry were unsettled and changed within time".² He defends his own answer which is based on functionality: "If poeticity, a poetic function gaining dominant importance, appears in a literary work, we will speak of poetry." On the contrary, Greimas and Courtés, approximate in their semiotic dictionary the "poetic discourse" to the "sacred discourse" insofar as an idea of "truth"³ arises out of it. Suffice it to refer to the theoretical position of Tzvetan Todorov who underscores in the "Encyclopaedic Dictionary of the Sciences of Language" (« *Dictionnaire encyclopedique des sciences du langage* ») that there is another opposition not taken into account when questioning the relationship between poetry and fiction. In that case, the discourse is analysed "on the level of its literality as a pure phonic, graphic and semantic configuration" ("au niveau de sa littéralité comme une pure configuration phonique, graphique et sémantique"⁴) opposed to a representational discourse "which evokes a universe of experience" ("qui évoque un univers d'expérience"). Hence this opposition disregards another one, i.e. the opposition of verse and prose where "the rhythmical organization of the discourse" ("organisation rythmique du discours") has to be analysed. In his theory of genres, he stresses his own theoretical position founded on a synthesis of classical concepts; and modern definitions. However, this association puts the critic in the predicament Jakobson had signaled. Indeed, his definitions of poetry are not set and occasional. To begin with, Todorov argues that "the discourse of poetry is above all and in a very evident way characterized by its versified nature" ("le discours de la poésie se caractérise en premier lieu, et de façon évidente, par sa nature versifiée"). At the same time, he underlines that "verse is not sufficient for a definition of poetry" ("le vers ne suffit pas à la définition de la poésie"). Other features especially linguistic ones which are settled "on other levels" ("à d'autres niveaux") have also to be considered following the different literary theories: the ornamental, affective, symbolist theory, or following the syntactic theory which studies the relationship between the textual elements. It is quite obvious that the issue in the concept of Todorov is that poetry is fading away under the destructive effects of the accidents of the changing times and his position does not even allow us to question the boundaries between fiction and poetry.

As far as theories of fiction are concerned, they generally put poetry aside considering it as different. One remembers Mikhail Bakhtin excluding poetry from polyphonic discourse. Gérard Genette distinguishes clearly between fiction and poetry when separating "two important types, or patterns, of literary praxis: fiction (narrative or dramatic) and poetry." ("deux grands types, ou ensembles, de pratiques littéraires : la fiction (narrative ou dramatique) et la poésie"⁶.) This distinction has been known quite a while and can only be confirmed, for it is based on the tenet that poetry has freed itself from the principles of the restrictive logic which underlie the notion of fiction. Fictionality is based on the opposition between representation and the factual, where however, distinctive objective features cannot be indicated. After Searle and other critics, Genette concedes that fictional narration cannot be distinguished from factual narration either by narratological items or by linguistic features or other formalistic categories. The only criteria of identification which allows us to recognize a difference and to determine it is the intention of the author: "It seems to me that one can reasonably describe the enunciations intended to be fictional as not serious (or not literal) assertions which recover, in the mode of an indirect speech act (or of a figure) the explicitly fictional declarations (or questionings)". ("Il me semble qu'on peut raisonnablement décrire les énoncés intentionnellement fictionnels comme des assertions non sérieuses (ou non littérales) recouvrant, sur le mode de l'acte du langage indirect (ou de la figure), des déclarations (ou demandes) fictionnelles explicites."⁷) However, poetry is different from fiction. It is constitutive, following Genette, "of literature by diction" ("de la littérature par diction"⁸) which "can be determined as the being of a text as distinct, though inseparable, from its spoken version. ("peut se définir par l'être d'un texte, comme distinct, quoique inseparable, de son dire.").

The criticism is not more explicit, as literary theory in general avoids entering further into the question. However, the specific relation of the poetic word to reality can be deduced from Bakhtin's device of dialogism, where the critic excludes poetry. As is known, Bakhtin considers dialogism as the exclusive tenet of the prose word, yet it seems to be essential also to the poetic word. The logic of Bakhtin's argument should be inverted saying that dialogism is the most intimate and main feature of the poetic word while being at the same time a transgeneric

phenomenon. The prose writer as well as the dramatist may also claim it⁹, but then it is undeniable that these plurivocal texts turn into poetry. Bakhtin describes dialogism as follows: "The word (and in a general sense the sign) is interindividual. All that is said, expressed, is situated outside of the "soul", outside of the speaker, does not belong to him in an exclusive manner. One could not leave the word to the sole speaker. The author has his undeniable rights to the word, but also the listener has his rights, and all those whose voices resound in the word have also their rights (there is nothing like the word of a single person). The word is a drama with three persons (it is not a duo, it is a trio). It occurs outside of the author and it could by no means be assigned to the author." ("Le mot (et d'une manière générale le signe) est interindividuel. Tout ce qui est dit, exprimé, se situe hors de l' "âme", hors du locuteur, ne lui appartient pas en exclusivité. On ne saurait abandonner la parole au seul locuteur. L'auteur a ses droits imprescriptibles à la parole, mais l'auditeur, lui aussi, a ses droits, et tous ceux dont les voix résonnent dans le mot ont leurs droits (il n'existe pas quelque chose qui serait le mot de personne). Le mot est un drame à trois personnages (ce n'est pas un duo, c'est un trio). Il se joue hors de l'auteur, et on ne saurait l'introduire à l'auteur.")¹⁰.

By this description, Bakhtin designates the grave concern of the poets, however without being aware of it. Poets perceive their language in a very conscious manner as not being their property, as sliding away because conventional words are not appropriate to express their intimate experiences. They are always the words of everybody, general signs utilized to designate this or that and not fitting individual utterances. Hence, the poets' whole work consists in fighting against this disengagement of language in order to find new authentic words.

The argument which leads the Russian theoretician to condemn the poetic word to live in the solitude of the monologue, is as follows: When a writer refers to objects, he has to deal with a Babylonian multitude of denominations, definitions, evaluations and values conferred to them by the consciousness of the society in course of time, whereas for a poet, these objects are, in a linguistic sense virginal to him, they have not yet been named. The poet, says Bakhtin, forgets about "the contradictory history of the verbal conception of his object and also about the present time, plurilingual as well, of that conception" ("l'histoire de la conception

verbale contradictoire de son objet, et le present tout aussi plurilingue de cette conception"¹¹). That happens the more the poet is looking for a unique, monologist language which makes him feel undivided and which gives him the opportunity to utilize every word, every form, and every expression in a direct sense.¹² In other words, the writer keeps his distance from language whereas the poet plunges into it and assimilates it on its ground.

This reasoning of Bakhtin reminds one of the Sartrean¹³ distinction between the writer and the poet. The French philosopher in his famous formula states that the writer "makes use of words" ("se sert des mots") whereas the poet "serves them" ("les sert"). First, "words are not in a primary sense objects, but designations of objects" ("les mots ne sont pas d'abord des objets, mais des désignations d'objets"), and second, words are things. However, there is a small difference between the two theoretical concepts. Contrary to Bakhtin, Sartre thinks that the poet keeps his distance from language, that the poet is beyond language ("le poète (qui) est hors du langage").

Much has been argued, and for good reasons, against the exclusion of the poetical word from dialogism, though it may be necessary to reconsider the arguments which miss their target because the view is too limited. Since the difference between fiction in the narrative sense and poetry undeniably exists, that difference cannot be founded on the simple opposition between dialogism and monologue. Nobody can free himself from history, not in life nor in language. The poet as it were, tries to find his way by speaking in between. Hence, the difference between fiction and poetry can only be based on the double status of the poetic word which is unique and authentic being at the same time plurilingual. Then, the question is whether, and if so, in which way the poetical word can be monologic and dialogic at the same time.

Man lives in language and the poet, even though he would like to, cannot escape from his socio-historical and cultural heritage, since words do not forget anything, in poetry still less than elsewhere. That is to say that poetic language, contrary to Bakhtin's conception, cannot be non-historical. The Mexican poet Octavio Paz puts it as follows: "Like all human creation, the poem is a historical product, son of time and place" ("Como toda creación humana, el poema es un producto

histórico, hijo de un tiempo y de un lugar”¹⁴). Thus the word in the poem exists only in a dialogical manner, and more, this plurilingual dimension is the field of work of the poet who aims to bring a new authentic relationship between words and things. It is by scrutinizing the words and thus revealing their dialogical implications, even though they might be most profoundly hidden, that the poet is able to cleanse the object of all that obstructs it, and this is precisely the way he can settle himself beyond history and approach the naming of the object in a new and free manner. Under this condition only, he can capture the authentic language and find a monologist word. In a deconstructive way, he walks through history and places himself beyond history. Thus, poetry reveals its own profound memory while going beyond history - or to say it in a more precise way: demonstrating this profound memory is already being beyond history and signifies the settling of a new language, which is the authentic poetic word, the poem.

A late poem of Rainer Maria Rilke, one of the greatest modern German poets, may help to illustrate this work on deconstruction of history. Rilke is one of the first modern German poets who deeply suffered from the loss of objects due to the inability of language to denominate them. Hence, he looked for a new way to approach objects and to restore their primary sense. Passing through all simple and ordinary things which had excited him by “their beauteous getting into the habit of the human”¹⁵, his way leads him finally to “that silence bigger than life [...] which later breathed on us from the space again and again when we came somewhere to the boundary of our existence”¹⁶. The poem proposed here as an example emerges at that removed place on the line of demarcation where the speaker - with the neutral voice of a reporter - can fix his eyes upon existence and non-existence at the same time. The poem referred to is one of the most celebrated sonnets of Rilke’s cycle “Sonnets to Orpheus”:

This is the creature that had never been.
 They never knew it, and yet, none the less,
 They loved the way it moved, its suppleness,
 its neck, its very gaze, mild and serene.

Not there, because they loved it, it behaved
 As though it were. They always left some space.

And in that clear unpeopled space they saved
it lightly reared its head, with scarce a trace

of not being there. They fed it, not with corn,
but only with the possibility
of being. And that was able to confer

such strength its brow put forth a horn. One horn.
Whitely it stole up to a maid -,

To be within the silver mirror and in her.¹⁷

No word pronounced with circumspection seems any more to be part of our language; rather it appears as if it were extricated from the infinite silence of the non-existent world of which it bears the traces. In the beginning of the poem, the nouns suggest the shape of the animal and the centre of its body, i.e. the luminosity of his glance. However, all remains at the level of the pure possibility which is underscored by the distance the silent space implies. Yet that potentiality is the very soul of the animal. It assigns the faculty to be the fabulous unicorn to him and to act in purity - i.e. to be as not being and act in the mode of a simulacrum actualized by his apparition in the mirror. The unreality of that reality is even more underscored by the fact that the mirror is double. It is the concrete silver object as well as the purity of the virgin. Thus, all becomes unreal at the end, the mirror and the lady transformed into a mirror, at the same time confirming their possible reality.

Replaced into our context, the poem conjures the legendary animal whose virginity was celebrated by the Middle Ages in all facets of its significance referring to more ancient times as the poet himself indicates in a note. He also calls the reader's attention to the tapestries of the 15th century. The dialogic dimension of this image is quite obvious. However, the poet resists that plurality of voices. He refuses to add to those histories, or stories, or fictions interrupting the narrative thread and insisting instead on the potential being of the mythic animal. He takes his place at the level of the growing appearance of the unicorn and not at that of its existence which only allows him to multiply the legends. He denies not only the detailed description of the tapestry, but also that of the unicorn itself. He contents himself with suggesting some significant features. Hence a reduction of the vocabulary which adds

to a ventilated syntax, so to speak, where the parataxis dominates disburdened by four enjambments and one insertion. Finally, the reflection of the mirror indicates in a metonymical way that there are no more stories to tell, that we are at the very end of fiction and that, on the contrary, the unicorn finds a place in reality as a result of the authentic words. Those words are recovered because the poem leads the fiction, which is dialogic per se, to its origin where all the voices, underscored by the plural of the personal pronoun, raise echoes however, in unison.

NOTES & REFERENCES

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13. See Jean-Paul Sartre, *Qu'est-ce que la littérature ?* (Paris : Gallimard, 1948) pp. 17-27

14. Paz, Octavio, *El arcoyla lira* (México : Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1956) p. 187.
15. Rilke, Rainer Maria. "Puppen. Zu den Wachspuppen von Lotte Pritzel", in. R.M.R.: *Sämtliche Werke* (Frankfort am Main: Insel Werkausgabe, t.11), pp. 1063-1074 (p. 1066): "die mich durch ihr schönes Eingewöhntsein ins Menschliche, da ich vorüberging, erschüttert haben."
16. Op.cit., p. 1069, "jenes überlebensgroße Schweigen [...], das uns später immer wieder aus dem Raume anhauchte, wenn wir irgendwo an die Grenze unseres Daseins traten."
17. Rilke, Rainer Maria, "Sonette an Orpheus", 11.4: "O dieses ist das Tier, das es nicht giebt. / Sie wußtens nicht und habens jeden Falls / - sein Wandeln, seine Haltung, seinen Hals, / bis in des stillen Blickes Licht - geliebt. // Zwar war es nicht. Doch weil sie's liebten, ward / ein reines Tier. Sie ließen immer Raum. / Und in dem Raume, klar und ausgespart, / erhob es leicht sein Haupt und brauchte kaum // zu sein. Sie nährten es mit keinem Korn. / nur immer mit der Möglichkeit, es sei. / Und die gab solche Stärke an das Tier, // daß es aus sich ein Stirnhorn trieb. Ein Horn. / Zu einer Jungfrau kam es weiß herbei - / und war im Silber-Spiegel und in ihr." Tr: <http://www.onlinekunst.de/rilke/einhorn.html>, 26.01.2006.

**'POST-MORTEM' NARRATIVE CONTINUITY:
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS**

Knowledge, as Jean-Francois Lyotard points out, is 'a question of competence that goes beyond the simple determination and application of the criterion of truth, extending to the determination and application of criteria of efficiency (technical qualification), of justice and/or happiness (ethical wisdom), the beauty of a sound or colour (auditory and visual sensibility), etc.'¹ 'Narration,' he says later, 'is the quintessential form of customary knowledge,'² restating thereby that which Roland Barthes had asserted two decades before Lyotard: 'Caring nothing for the division between good and bad literature, narrative is international, transhistorical, transcultural: it is simply there, like life itself.'³ Lyotard's concern for the status of the narrative in the postmodern age is that it has lost its 'functors,' and has thus suffered dispersal consequent to the predominant 'incredulity towards metanarratives.'⁴ Therefore, the postmodern condition incorporates a tragic dilemma in which this incredulity, loss of functors, and dispersal, of the teleological grand narratives, has placed in especially grave danger the 'determination and application of the criteria' that relate to 'justice and/or happiness (ethical wisdom).' The most serious question that accompanies the postmodern condition is the possible erosion in the customary knowledge that resulted in the inculcation of such ethical wisdom. Essentially, for Lyotard, the processes that culminated in the arrival of the postmodern condition undermined this ethical wisdom, which would otherwise have ensured a high degree of justice, and, therefore, happiness. However, this triangular relationship between knowledge, narrative, and justice, transcends the national, the historical, and the cultural. All civilisations have sought to confine the infinite possibilities encompassed within this

triangle, by evolving laws and codes of public and private behaviour. Such restrictions have always failed in this primary role, because the laws and codes have been impositions, required enforcement, and, most vitally, needed interpretations in exceptional cases.

Johan Huizinga wrote of the *Homo ludens* back in 1938⁵. John D Niels, in a similar attempt at re-categorising the human species, labelled us *Homo narrans* sixty-one years later, saying that it is through the art of storytelling alone that 'an otherwise unexceptional species has become much more interesting'⁶. The fact is that we are nodal points in unimaginatively vast narrative networks, and each individual is at the same time a ceaseless fount of narratives, both ante- and post-mortem. Our selves are essentially narrative constructs, built through both self-narratives and others' narratives about us. The conduct of our public and private lives is greatly influenced by the stories we tell about ourselves, and the stories others tell about us. Theodore Sarbin thus refers to the 'storied nature of human conduct,' while discussing the role played by the narrative in psychology⁷. In this great ebb and flow of narratives, every narrative not only has antenarratives, which anticipate its existence⁸, but also counternarratives that oppose its discourse. Narrative analysis, and the elements of narratology can be used to great effect in understanding ourselves, and the world around us, but such understanding essentially remains highly subjective, and quite beyond the rigidity of the logic of either scientific or legal examination. One knows well that knowledge can never be an absolute indicator of truth, but there have been cases where the narrative has wholly failed to perform its role as a customary carrier of knowledge, and thus left justice (and, by extension, ethical wisdom) stuck in a perennial quagmire of doubt. The aim of this paper is to demonstrate the intrinsically unstable relationship between knowledge, narrative, and justice, by reviewing cases in which the administration of 'justice' remains open to query. Gerald Prince writes that the narrative, as evidenced by its etymological relation to the Latin word 'Gnarus,' 'represents a mode of knowledge'⁹. The fact remains that it is a mode of knowledge in need of careful handling, because the narrative is essentially a construct. Michael J Toolan points to the 'degree of artificial prefabrication,' as one of the foremost typical characteristics of the narrative¹⁰. The basis of this 'prefabrication' or 'constructedness' is either causal or temporal. Viewing

this in conjunction with Prince's summation of the definition of the narrative as that which 'illuminates temporality and humans as temporal beings,' one realises that the narrative is a prefabricated carrier of knowledge that bases itself primarily on temporality, or, as Prince puts it, the narrative 'deciphers' time". Other narratologists, like Rimmon-Kenan¹², have emphasised the predominance of the temporal element in narration. Irrespective of whether one views time as St Augustine does, that 'time is nothing else but a protraction of the mind,'¹³ or in the manner of Kant, that time is not a 'discursive ... but a pure form of sensible intuition,' and, therefore, to be considered as given *a priori*, time remains the most vital constituent dimension of the narrative¹⁴.

The human sense of time demands continuity. Chronological discontinuities in individuals' lives are the source of suspicion, since time unaccounted for, or unaccountable, arouses questions as to where the time missing went. This is true especially of the linear concept of time, which is also the constitutional or legal perception of time. Considerations of the cyclicity of time remain limited to the realms of art, culture, and religion. Unaccountable chronological interruptions in the life-story of an individual engender doubts about the sameness of the self. In other words, they create identity crises of a unique kind. The depredation of the corporeal self is a process of continuity in time, or, a narrative that is in need of ratification through narrational support from other extended aspects of selfhood, such as the mind, the workplace, and even financial status. The wearing-out of the body is an inevitable process subject to the passing of time, and by which the passage of time may be realised. But this realisation, in order to be granted constitutional or legal authorisation, needs to be vetted by others' narratives about the individual. If my colleagues attest to the fact that I have been a co-worker for the last decade, my identity is legally ratified. I may have enforced or bribed certain people to attest to my identity, and this deceit is a criminal act, but it stands until the crime is detected and proved to be a violation of the law. The uniqueness of the identity crisis created by time missing from one's life becomes evident when one realises that this violation of the law pertains as much to conspiracy, as to imposture: I will have conspired to be legally recognised as someone I never was. While on the one hand this brings us to the point of disjuncture that separates the real from the imagined or fact from fiction, we are also

confronted with the need to firstly identify this point of disjuncture, and, secondly, to see how temporal discontinuity relates to the sameness of the self. Clearly, an empirical approach would be ideal here, as this would serve the purposes of law, and, as legal precedence acts as a directive principle, comparing cases of 'post-mortem' narrative continuity would be exemplary, instructive, and relevant. These are cases in which temporal narration is interrupted by the absolute abruptness of death, only to be resumed when the one publicly accepted as dead arises from the dust and the ashes as the phoenix does. Nonetheless, the fact remains that the law identifies the corporeal being as one endowed with well-defined rights and duties within the general framework of the constitutional code of conduct. The personality of the individual is not recognised by the law other than in cases where defects in personality transgress the constitutional code of conduct, as in the case of those afflicted with psychiatric ailments that may cause injury either to themselves, or others around them.

There must have been many cases of 'post-mortem' narrative continuity in times when travelling was hazardous and communication unreliable, as in the Crusades. The story of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus is apocryphal. The Seven Sleepers awaken two hundred and fifty years later, to find that Christianity has become the dominant religion, and their awakening reaffirmed the truth of the Resurrection, and their death as soon as they had told their tale demonstrated the end of their utility at the end of the performance of the prophetic role given them. The genre of the revenant finds expression in the Middle Ages, fuelled as much by the fear of the supernatural, as by the popular fear in Europe and America in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries of being buried alive. Considering the contemporary state of medical practice, may be some people were buried while alive, only to die later, due to their being interred. The devising of 'safety coffins' did not help, as there seem to exist no records of any case in which this kind of coffin was put to good use. Edgar Allan Poe used this theme in his short story of 1844, 'The Premature Burial.' While Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) may be seen as a variation of the revenant theme, William Wyman Jacobs gave new life to the revenant genre in his most famous short story, 'The Monkey's Paw' (1902). 'Post-mortem' narrative continuity does not occur in the revenant genre because the being that undergoes

revival does not return to reclaim its old place in life. It is presented as an aberration in, or a violation of, the laws of nature. The being is usually an animated corpse, often in search of redemption, and pacified whenever such redemption is made available. In contradistinction to the revenant story, I apply the phrase “‘post-mortem’ narrative” to all such cases where the subject is believed dead, but returns to claim his/her place in society after a usually considerable period of time has passed since s/he was considered to have died. In all such cases, the gap in time that separates the subject from the ante- to the post-mortem stage is often found to be arguable mainly in terms of the narrative. This includes self-narratives, and others’ narratives about them.

The only case of ‘post-mortem’ narrative continuity in fiction is to be found in Washington Irving’s short story, ‘Rip van Winkle.’¹⁵ Irving adapted this story from a popular German folktale, which was one of a number that used a similar theme, and transplanted it into a newly-evolving American culture through publication in *The Sketch-Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.* (1819-1820). Rip’s meeting with Hendrick Hudson and his crew presents a confrontation between the present and the past, which is transformed into one between the present and the future. Rip goes to sleep for twenty years in human time, and wakes up feeling that he had only been asleep for one night. The fracture in the narrative trajectory is extremely well concealed: ‘On waking, he found himself on the green knoll whence he had first seen the old man of the glen. He rubbed his eyes - it was a bright sunny morning. The birds were hopping and twittering ... and the eagle was wheeling aloft and breasting the pure mountain breeze. “Surely,” thought Rip, “I have not slept here all night.”’ Rip mistakes the eagle that he sees wheeling aloft for the one that he had seen just before falling asleep. This constitutes a false spatiotemporal underpinning, the passing of two decades being slowly reinforced for the reader, as Rip reaches for his fowling-piece, only to discover that it has rusted, and that his dog, Wolf, is nowhere to be seen. Rip van Winkle’s return to his village was the cause of great consternation and surprise. America had changed beyond Rip’s wildest dreams: ‘Every answer puzzled him too, by treating of such enormous lapses of time, and of matters which he could not understand.’ The identity crisis deepens when he asks if nobody knows Rip van Winkle, and he is shown a perfect image of himself: ‘Rip looked, and

beheld a precise counterpart of himself as he went up the mountain; apparently as lazy, and certainly as ragged.' This is his son, who has inherited the same indolence. The point of public recognition comes only when an old woman peers at his face, and exclaims: 'Sure enough! It is Rip van Winkle - it is himself. Welcome home again, old neighbour. Why, where have you been these twenty long years?' In later days, people came in from distant parts to see this human 'phenomenon,' and to listen to his almost improbable tale. In this sense, Rip van Winkle became not only the subject of mythical narratives, but also their purveyor, for he alone could speak of the distant past in which he had lived. This was enough to legitimise him, for 'he was revered as one of the patriarchs of the village, and a chronicle of the "old times before the war."' For us, it is easy to accept the story as it stands, for it simply asks of us to imagine the many possible implications of the narrative continuities and discontinuities that are cusped into this twenty-year lapse in time. On a greater narrational scale, we can even compare the Revolution of 1776 with that in Rip's personal life. In terms of narrative explication, 'Rip van Winkle' was embedded into American popular culture in order to give body to the grand narrative of the American Revolution, which in its turn, had to render subservient the real narrative of the suppression of the American-Indian peoples. On the other hand, we must pause to consider the legal implications of Rip van Winkle's return from the dead. As Rip possessed no property to speak of and his own house lay unkempt following his wife's death, and given his son's laziness, there was no question of a legal imbroglio over Rip's identity. The public acceptance of Rip is sufficient for an enjoyable 'post-mortem' continuity. But this was a work of fiction, and its intention lay in giving America its own heritage of folktales.

Marco Polo's recounting of his experiences as a traveller was for long considered to be fictive, for he wrote of matters far beyond the horizons of contemporary knowledge. What is more important is that he left Venice a youth of seventeen (1271), and returned a man aged forty-one (1294). Having long been given up for dead, Polo's arrival was greeted with suspicion of imposture. Dressed as he was in the Oriental manner, his stories of his travels were considered fabulous, and his recognition by his relatives is as much a matter of folklore as that of Rip van Winkle. R E Latham, in his introduction to the Penguin

edition of the *Travels*, refers to Giambattista Ramusio's story of the Polos' homecoming: "at first the wanderers' families, who had long believed them dead, failed to recognise these strange beings 'with a *je ne sais quoi* of the Tartar about them;' then, seeing them clad in coarse and shabby attire, they were contemptuous as well as resentful."¹⁶ Unfortunately, Ramusio did not focus on how the 'post-mortem' narrative continued in this case. Nonetheless one may estimate the surprise, the initial tentativeness, and the joy of recognition and reconciliation that would constitute the Polos' homecoming.

As individuals, to greater or lesser extents, the overwhelming majority of the human race indulges in imposture. As has already been mentioned, the law concerns itself only with the body of the individual, endowing it with rights and duties, and delivers punishment when this body transgresses the law. The law, unconcerned in normal circumstances with the mind of the individual, does not have any means of dealing with identity crises. Hence many impostors have gone free, while others have been apprehended. Whenever they have been apprehended, the narrative has played a vital role in determining their imposture. Paradoxically, in most cases, such determination has been controversial. The latest case to hit the headlines in Europe and America was that of Charles Albert Stopford, who is believed to have used the name of a dead infant, Christopher Edward Buckingham, to claim recognition as a peer in the United Kingdom. Stopford succeeded in posing as 'Lord' Buckingham from 1982 till 2005, with no questions being raised about the 'post-mortem' narrative continuity. He was caught out on essentially technical grounds regarding his passport in 2005. The gravity of the case soon became evident, and discovery of his fraudulence was due to the fact that his fingerprints matched those of an American citizen. The identity crisis here stemmed from the doubt as to whether the infant who was believed to have died, had in fact survived into adulthood. Stopford's family was reported in the media to have narrated that they had recognised him from photographs¹⁷. The *Times* interestingly captioned its article dated 7 November 2005 on Stopford as 'Lord of the Lies: but who is bogus earl?'¹⁸ Fingerprinting aside, Stopford's 'post-mortem' narrative was countered by his American families, and this resulted in a more or less definitive identification.

The other contemporary case was for long mired in controversy, until vital changes in history and forensic techniques seem to have

finally laid it to rest. Many women have claimed to be the Grand Duchess Anastasia, who some said had survived the Yekaterinburg massacre of 1918. Of these, the most persistent claimant was Anna Anderson of Charlottesville, Virginia. The startling discovery in 1991 of the mass grave of the Russian royal family showed that the body of Anastasia was missing, and the consequent review of history that took place due to this, resulted in the use of DNA-matching techniques to see if Anna Anderson was Anastasia. The results showed she was not related to the Romanovs. What is vital to this discussion however, is that ever since 1922, when Anna first claimed to be the Grand Duchess, the 'post-mortem' narrative continuity was a topic with adherents for and against the claimant. Both sides had competing narratives, the issue spilling over into the 1980s, and still alive, for another grave discovered in the same area in Yekaterinburg in 2007 contained the partially burnt bodies of a young man and woman. Even as we await the forensic reports on this, the 'post-mortem' narrative continuity of Anastasia thrives on through films, television adaptations and retellings, and novels.

Russia had previously produced other imperial impostors. Ivan the Terrible's youngest son, Dmitry Ivanovich, was believed by many to have survived an assassination attempt in 1591, and gone into hiding in order to preserve his life. As Ivan had had his eldest son murdered in 1581, and his second son was mentally challenged, three 'False' Dmitrys made their consecutive appearances in the 'Time of Troubles' (1598 - 1613). The first 'False' Dmitry succeeded in convincing not only a considerable portion of the populace, but also the imperial army, which allowed his assumption of the Romanov throne in 1605. The second 'False' Dmitry made his appearance in 1606, after the assassination of the first. The second waged war for the throne until his own assassination in 1611, when a third 'False' Dmitry appeared. The third Dmitry barely survived a year as claimant, being captured and executed in 1612. The fact that these claimants had sufficient popular support so as to be able to raise armies, gives credence to the vibrant 'post-mortem' narrative continuities that resulted in the usual division in opinion about their authenticity. The first of the real-life cases in which 'post-mortem' narrative continuity becomes an issue for legal discussion, is that of Martin Guerre. A contemporary account of the case, titled *Arrest Memorable* was written by Jean de Coras, who was one of the judges, in 1560, and published

five years later. Martin Daguerre disappeared in 1548, from the Pyrenean village of Artigat, after he was accused of stealing grain from his father. He left his wife, Bertrande, and their son, to subsist as they could. In 1556, a 'new' Martin appeared, who looked similar, and who managed to convince the immediate family and their fellow villagers that he was the same Martin. On being accepted, he lived with Bertrande for the next three years, and they had two children, of whom the daughter survived. Doubts about his identity had always persisted, especially as the Guerre family owned property, some of which had passed on to the new Martin. Pierre Guerre, the uncle, discovered that the new Martin was one Arnaud du Tilh. The case went to court at Rieux in 1560, where the judges heard the testimony of 150 witnesses, and came to the decision that the new Martin was an impostor, and sentenced him to death. Arnaud appealed to the French parliament at Toulouse, where the judges tended to believe him, until the real Martin made his appearance dramatically in the middle of the proceedings. He was now one-legged, consequent to a war injury. The entire family now recognised the one-legged Martin as the original, and Arnaud's sentence was confirmed. He was hanged on 16 September, 1560. This story was very popular in contemporary Europe, and was discussed by Montaigne in an essay, 'Of Cripples.'¹⁹ Alexandre Dumas included the case of Martin Guerre in his monumental eight volume work *Celebrated Crimes* (1839 - 41)²⁰. Dumas's account is of course fictionalised, and the story pivots upon the testimony of Bertrande, who seems to have remained silent when asked which of the two Martins the true one was. Dumas ascribes Bertrande's silence to the fact that she was better treated by the second Martin, but could not find it in herself, given the subservience of women and dominance of the church in her age, to speak up. Her dilemma is easy to understand: choosing Arnaud would send Martin to the gallows, an act of murder that would prey on her conscience, while identifying Martin would do the same to a man who had treated her so much better than her legally-wedded husband. Martin's lameness is not the crucial factor for Dumas, and in his retelling of the story, Bertrande dies, almost by will, the night before Arnaud is hanged. Montaigne is far more critical, having attended, it seems, the trial at Toulouse. In his essay, he wondered at the judge's audacity in ordering Arnaud to be hanged. Montaigne wrote: 'I remember (and I hardly

remember anything else) that he [Coras, the judge] seemed to have rendered the imposture of him whom he judged to be guilty, so wonderful and so far exceeding both our knowledge and his own, who was the judge, that I thought it a very bold sentence that condemned him to be hanged.' Arnaud was certainly guilty of the 'secular' crime of imposture, and the ecclesiastical one of living out of wedlock with the wife of another, in full knowledge of the fact. In those hard times, hanging was the ordinarily prescribed punishment for most 'secular' crimes. Montaigne, however, is quite correct in questioning the validity of the judgement.

Gautam Bhadra's book, *Jaal Rajar Katha* (2002), examines somewhat tangentially 'post-mortem' narrative continuity in the famous case of Rajah Pratapchand of Burdwan. Today the case does not seem as sensational as it would have been in its time. However, it dominated the popular mind in nineteenth-century Bengal having been enriched through continual retelling. Moreover, it involved both the ruling elite of contemporary Bengal, including Dwarkanath Tagore, and early thinkers of the Bengal Renaissance, like David Hare and Rajah Ram Mohan Roy. In the fourth chapter of his book, titled '*Mora Banchar Rajniti*' ('The Politics of Life and Death;' my translation)²¹, Bhadra outlines the salient features of the case, which, in a sense reuses the trope of the one declared dead returning to life. On winter's night, the 3rd of January 1821, Rajah Pratapchand (born 1791), the heir of the ruler of the Zamindari of Burdwan, Rajah Tejchand, was reportedly cremated on the banks of the Ganges at Kalna. Elsewhere in the book, Bhadra mentions how Tejchand had had to hand over the administration of the zamindari to his son in 1813 due to persistent illness consequent to sexually-transmitted disease. This passing of the administration possibly urged the Dewan of the estate, Paranchand Kapur, to conspire against Pratapchand. In 1827, six years after Pratapchand's death, Tejchand adopted Kapur's son, and married his eleven-year-old daughter, thus placing his Dewan at the helm of power in one of the richest and largest zamindaris of Bengal. The 'post-mortem' narrative begins with the arrival at Burdwan towards the middle of 1835, of a fakir named Ullack Shaw. He gathered a not inconsiderable following, which exclaimed his resemblance to the late Pratapchand, an issue Ullack did not dispute. However, he was forced to move to the adjoining district of Bankura in September 1835 because

these rumours seem to have caused unease to the local administration. The same problem followed him to Bankura, where the District Magistrate, WH Elliot, seems to have promptly arrested Ullack Shaw for breach of peace, and sent him to jail. It was from prison that Ullack Shaw sent Elliot a missive in January 1836, disclosing the fact that it was time for him to surrender his voluntary exile in disguise, and so revealed himself to be Rajah Pratapchand. Again, it was from the same prison, and later in the same year, that the 'publicly-acclaimed' Rajah Pratapchand sent the Governor-General, Lord Auckland, a petition along similar lines, with the additional explanation that he had renounced *sansara*, and adopted the life of a *sannyasi*, travelling in this guise for fourteen years to various places of pilgrimage, in order to expiate himself of sins committed in his youth, sins that violated the scriptures, and so required such expiation. The series of legal representations against this 'disclosure' began almost at once, and continued until 1839, when the judgment of imposture was finally delivered. A close reading of the vast amount of historical material put together by Bhadra reveals the complexity of the several cases against the claimant. While on the one hand the 'impostor' stood accused of disturbing public peace at least twice in his 'post-mortem' persona, he was also held guilty of both 'gross fraud and imposture,' and also of 'falsely and fraudulently' using the name of the late Pratapchand to fleece many naive persons, especially the Dewan of the Government Treasury, Radhakissen Bysack, of money²². It was on these counts that the alleged impostor was charged on the 20th September 1838 by the District Magistrate of Hooghly, EA Samuels, and the cases referred to the court of James Curtis. The hearings continued through the rest of the year, and in January 1839, Curtis gave his judgment, and referred the same to the *Sadar Nizamat Adalat*, which upheld it, and thus confirmed the imposture²³. The prosecution, so Bhadra tells us, presented 67 witnesses, while the claimant's lawyers listed 347 persons, of whom less than 50 could make it to the courtroom, given the uncooperative attitude of the administration, and the inability of the claimant to bear the expense of so many testifiers²⁴. The Curtis hearings thus prove the decisive role played by the narrative. Dr Robert Scott, then Surgeon of the 37th Madras Native Infantry, had served as the Civil Surgeon of Burdwan between 1815 and 1817, during which period he had been well acquainted with Pratapchand. Scott stood firm

in recounting Pratapchand's ailments, and in his contention that the claimant was the same person, because he had found evidence of the marks left by the same diseases on him²⁵. David Hare, then Secretary, Calcutta Medical College, also gave his opinion, drawing upon his acquaintance with Pratapchand during 1817-1818, that the claimant was beyond doubt the same person²⁶. A similar narrational claim was made by the Rajah of Posta, Buddenath Ray, then a Director of the Bank of Bengal²⁷. Against these narratives, lay a series of counter-narratives. Dwarkanath Tagore's assertion, drawing upon his previous acquaintance with Pratapchand led him to the firm conclusion that the claimant was an impostor²⁸. Radhakissen Bysack too attested to the fact that Pratapchand was a perfect stranger to him²⁹. The issue was clinched by the narratives of at least fifteen witnesses for the prosecution, who recounted with somewhat varying details the events that occurred on the 3rd January 1821, leading up to the cremation of Pratapchand the same night. The most vital of these seems to have been the testimony of Radhamohan Sircar, a trusted employee of the zamindari, who stated that he saw the cremation actually take place until the entire body had been consumed, and the post-cremation rituals completed³⁰. The tale of the spurious king thus lay open to the application of the logic of the law of evidence, and the impostor spent the rest of his days dependent upon the magnanimity of his supporters, while the zamindari passed on, in 1840, to Mahtabchand Bahadur, Tejendra's adopted son. If Bengalis and Englishmen in India, in particular in Bengal, were enlivened by the case of the Burdwan Raj, Victorian England, already in the throes of the crisis of faith, was rocked by the Tichborne Case. This was one of the most sensational cases of the late-nineteenth century, and its legal implications have been deeply researched into. Roger Tichborne, the heir to the family estates in Hampshire, was declared dead in 1854, having presumably been shipwrecked the previous year on his way back home from Rio de Janeiro. The claimant, Arthur Orton, made his appearance in London in 1866, in response to an advertisement by Roger's mother, who was convinced that he was alive. Orton, alias Thomas Castro, had been living as a slaughterman in Wagga Wagga, in Australia. Lady Tichborne's unexpected demise in 1868 changed matters for the worse for Orton. The case was begun by the claimant, Arthur Orton/Thomas Castro/Sir Roger Tichborne on 11 May 1871 at

the Court of Common Pleas. Over a hundred people swore he was Sir Roger. The case was closed on 5 March 1872, and as the jury had decided against the claimant, he was arrested, and tried for perjury in 1873. Here too he was found guilty and sentenced in 1874 to 14 years' rigorous imprisonment. So popular had the case become, and so avidly was it followed by the Victorian public, that the class-division of English society found expression via the judgement, and riots occurred in London. The Tichborne Trials (*Regina v. Castro*, 1873-74) were recounted in great detail by one J B Atlay, Barrister-at-Law, in 1899, in a book titled, *Famous Trials of the Century*; published by Grant Richards at London. On surfing the net, I found that the e-text of this book is available online at the Tarlton Law Library, of the University of Texas Law School, as part of the 'Law in Popular Culture Collection.'³¹ In 1933, there appeared Jorge Luis Borges's short story, 'The Improbable Impostor Tom Castro'³² and in 1969, the novel *The Link: A Victorian Mystery*, by Robin Maugham (1916 - 81)³³, a British writer, both of which were based on this case. Here too the philosophy of identity confronts the narrative, and it is the narrative that complicates the case, giving it twists and turns that seem to have left the government prosecution doubtful. The Attorney-General, Sir John Duke Coleridge³⁴, speaking for the prosecution when the first Tichborne case was in Chancery, urged the jury to first consider the dubious nature of the claimant's statement: '*The statement made by the claimant is so long, so strange, here and there asking for explanation, and yet not in itself suggesting what the explanation is to be, containing now and then in itself coincidences which, if they were true, would no doubt be startling, and which would be far more startling if they could, as they cannot, be woven into anything like an argumentative connection* (My italics).'³⁵ Thence, he proceeded to lay before them, so Atlay tells us, 'hundreds of facts, each undisputed, each conclusive, each inconsistent with the story told by the claimant, and convicting him of a fraud, of a lie, of a crime on a scale and depth of wickedness hitherto unexampled ... He did not ask the jury to believe in the existence of any huge multitudinous conspiracy, but rather of a monstrous imposture, to the accidental and temporary success of which a great many persons in various ways and degrees had contributed, of whom few indeed could be branded as conscious conspirators.'³⁶ Interestingly, the Attorney-General, in raising the issue

of physical resemblance, referred to the case of Martin Guerre. The main evidence came from the technique he had adopted, ‘To go through the story of his life from the materials under my hand, and to get from him as far as I could his account of matters of which I had a true account, but not at the same time to let him know what the true account was.’³⁷ Here lay the essence of expertise in the use of the narrative in extracting information so as to get as close to knowing the truth as possible. Atlay writes that it was thus that the effect of the Attorney-General’s speech was to ‘roll away the web of mystery and imposture which for five years had shrouded the Tichborne case. The public were for the first time in possession of the facts; they were provided with the clue which led through the tangled maze, and at length the whole conspiracy stood revealed before them.’ In summing up, the Lord Chief Justice, Sir Alexander Cockburn, said ‘[t]here never was in the history of jurisprudence a case in which such an amount of imputation, accusation, and invective was used before; and I trust that such an instance will never occur again.’³⁸ Of the greatest significance was Sir Alexander’s recognition of the essential identity crisis at the centre of this unique case of imposture that was entirely rooted in the dilemma of narrative identity. He cautioned the jury: ‘For I cannot help believing, whether the claimant is or is not Roger Tichborne, that there must have been many points of resemblance between the two. I cannot suppose that honest people would come forward and say, ‘That is Roger Tichborne,’ if there were not a likeness between the claimant and Roger; and I do not think that even the members of the family would have for a moment entered into communication with the claimant if they had not hesitated to at once reject him from finding that there was, at all events, some degree of likeness which called for further examination.’³⁹ Orton was released from prison in 1884, and remained largely forgotten by the public until his death fourteen years later.

Soon afterwards, across the Atlantic, a Probate Court Judge of Middlesex County, Cambridge, Massachusetts, George F Lawton, was given the unenviable task of supervising the trial of another, equally sensational, case that involved ‘post-mortem’ narrative continuity. This time the problem was worsened by there being not one, but two claimants. Online law library archives seem to list no records of this trial. Much information, however, could be gleaned from the online

archives of *The New York Times*. The most detailed article on this affair appeared in the Sunday edition following the judgment⁴⁰. The reason for this is easily understood immediately one reads the caption: 'The Most Dramatic Will Case in Boston's History: Which of these Two Men is the Lost Son of Daniel Russell? - Riots in Staid Melrose, Mass., Follow Court's Decision and Judge is Burned in Effigy.' It so transpired, as one gets to know reading between the lines of the journalese, that Daniel Blake Russell, the younger son of a rich and famous senator from Melrose, Daniel Russell, found it impossible to get along with his father's domineering nature, and, walked out of the family house after a quarrel. This was in 1885, when Daniel was 23. Bertha York, a young woman who had witnessed the quarrel, tried to persuade Daniel to change his mind. As they stood by the kerb, a tram came along, and Daniel boarded it. He was not seen or heard of again until 1909. The newspaper quotes the father as having said that Daniel had disappeared 'as if the earth had opened up and swallowed him up. The senator died in 1907, leaving behind an estate worth \$750,000 and a will that required his elder son, William Russell, to share the inheritance with Daniel, in the case of his return. In April 1909, a 'breezy Westerner of magnetic personality and democratic ways' walked in and introduced himself as Daniel to William.⁴¹ After three interviews, William rejected his claim to be Daniel, and on 20 September 1909 the usual litigation began. The journalist was certain that 'The famous Tichborne Case pales before it in dramatic interest.' Over 200 witnesses testified, and the case dragged through several months, continuing into the following year, 1910. As the case was reaching its conclusion, a Martin Guerre - like dramatic intervention occurred. A second man came to Melrose, claiming that *he* was the real Daniel. The newspapers at once named the former claimant 'Dakota Dan,' as he came from Massena, North Dakota, and the latter as 'Fresno Dan,' because he had been a fruit-grower in Fresno, California. 'Fresno Dan' was, like the 'ante-mortem' Daniel Blake Russell, a diffident man. William Russell and his cousin, Ferdinand Almy, claimed (again in the manner of Martin Guerre's family) that Fresno was the real Daniel. Dakota, on the other hand, was alleged to be one James D Rousseau, of Massena, New York. As is usual in these cases, many witnesses considered Dakota to be the true Daniel, while others including members of the Rousseau family identified him as James. The immense complexity

of the case comes to view when one reads that handwriting experts and even post-office officials contradicted each other's testimonies, until it became obvious that the identity crisis had become a line of demarcation, which is again characteristic of these cases: those who believed James stood against those who did not.

Dakota Dan seemed at one point to have clinched the case when he brought three witnesses to prove that James Rousseau had once been severely wounded. One of these was the doctor who had treated him, who said that the scar left by this injury would be irremovable and unmistakable. Thus the case rolled on through counter-accusations by Dakota that Fresno had been deliberately planted by William Russell to keep him from his inheritance. Fresno's explanation was that he had come into the case later because he had no intention of returning to his family, but had done so out of a sense of duty when he saw his brother about to be fleeced by an impostor. In Fresno's case, several important citizens testified to his identity as Daniel, and on Tuesday, 12 April 1910, Judge Lawton read out his decision before a packed courtroom, with crowds spilling over outside. Lawton said, 'After all these months of evidence, I conclude that this vast conspiracy which was alleged to have been arranged, and which embraced the stealing of Post Office stamps, forging of letters, subornation of perjury, and other similar crimes, is without foundation, and it vanishes in thin air.'⁴² These allegations were the figment of the petitioner's, i.e. Dakota's, counsel, he continued. While stating that '[t]he photographs which are said to be those of James Rousseur [*sic*"?]' of Massena, NY, must... be regarded as genuine,' Lawton somehow felt it necessary to point out the fact that '[n]either the respondents (Messrs FC Almy and William C Russell) nor their counsel have been anything but honest in their defence of the Russell estate against an impostor and a dishonest claimant.' Lawton dismissed the three petitions brought before the Probate Court, on the ground that none of these were put up by Daniel Blake Russell, 'but by one who attempted to impersonate him and defraud the Russell estate.' The *New York Times* reporter covering the case noted how the judge's decision was greeted with a few seconds' silence by the crowd, which then gave way to muttering, and then uproar. Dakota walked out of the courtroom weeping, and the crowd thronged around him in sympathy. Rioting, reminiscent of those that had followed in the wake of the